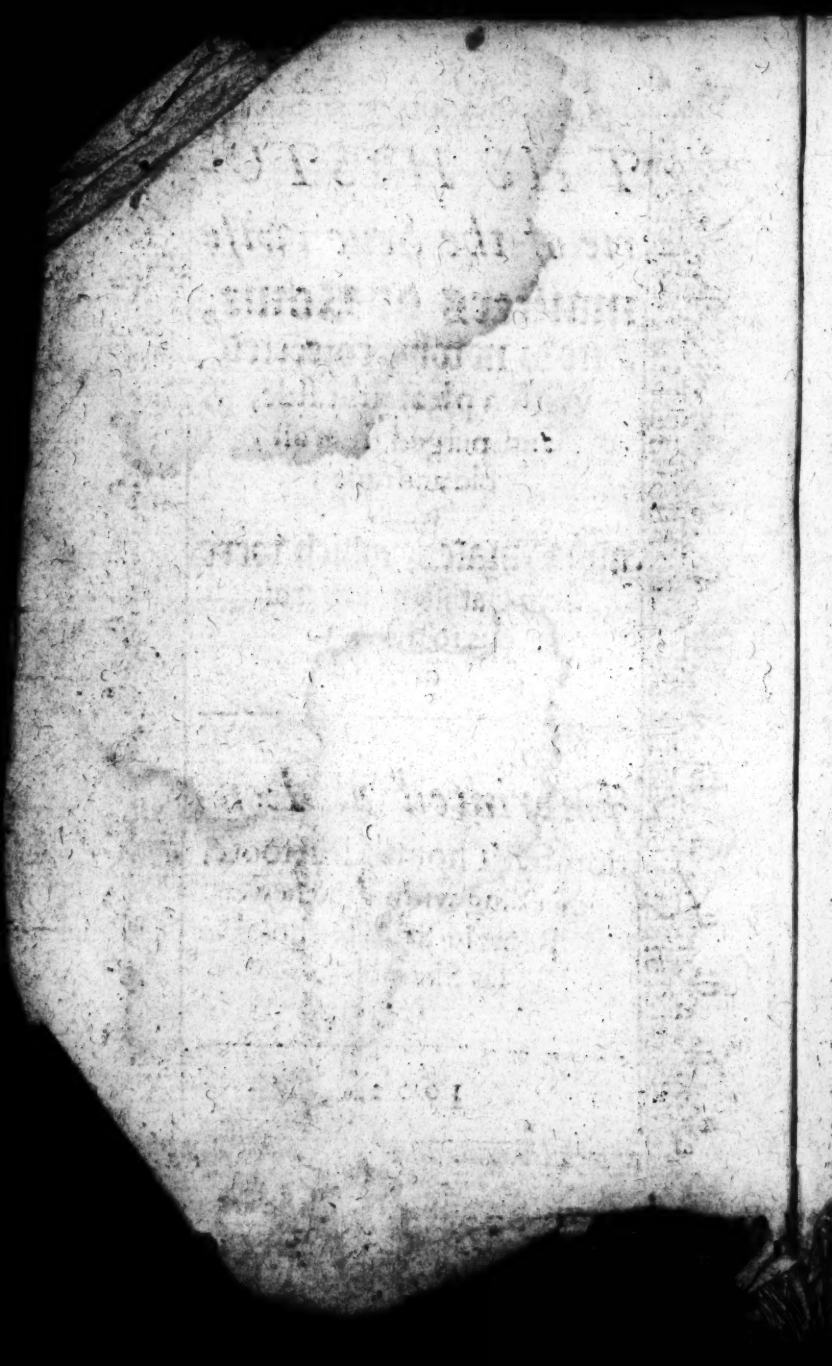
THE HYSTO-
rie of the Seuen wise
maisters of Rome,
now newlye corrected
vvith a pleasaunt stile,
and purged from all
old and rude
words
and Phrases, which were
very loathsome and tedi-
ous to the Rea-
der.

Imprinted at Lon-
don by Thomas Purfoote,
dwelling within the newe
Rents in Saint Nicho-
las Shambles.

1602.



Thomas Greene G[illegible]

man to the learned Reade[illegible]

FOr as much as there bee many of the learned which hould an opinion that the old ancient Engliſh vſed of our Britaine writers, aboue Foure or Fiue Hundred yeares paſt is the moſt naturall, fineſt and beſt Engliſh: perhaps ſome may raſhly iudge the correction of this ancient Hiſtorie, to be not onely ſuperfluous and vaine, but alſo iniurious to antiquitie and the Tranſlator thereof. Notwithſtanding the learned and diſcreet Reader well conſidering the difference betweene the phraſe of this booke & Chaucer, or ſuch other like, muſt needs manifeſtly diſcerne, that although the ancient phraſe of the one may be permitted for a monument of antiquitie; yet that the diſordered tranſlation of this Hiſtorie might not be read without great miſliking, or loathſomnes to the eares of the learned or vnlearned, who had any Capacitie or naturall iudgement. But that I may not ſeeme to find fault without a cauſe, or to reprehend without reaſon, I will here note three ſpecially vanities & vices which I found cuſtomably diſperſed in the ſtile of this tranſlator. The firſt is the

...ion of the Nominatiue case and the ... other art of speech, where by the sence was much obscured, as though he would haue imitated the elocution of the latin tong which in our english or any other language is verie ridiculous, except it be in a certain phrases fieldome to be vsed. Neither shall we note in any old or new writer the like conceit, but onely in this translator. The second vice is the vsing of deuised and vnknowne words, and displacing of good wordes out of their right kind, & these two first faults must needes be ascribed to the translators singuler errour. But the third which is patching in of some words nothing pertinent to the lem, and leauing out others, sometime by whole members of a sentence at once, may seem rather to be attributed to the negligence of the Printer in time past, from time to time neglecting the correction thereof, for that as I past the phrase and penning, it was so rude and barbarous, that verie fieldome but by chaunce it hath been before time vsed among Gentlemen, learned men, or the ciuiler sort, but only of the common multitude, whereas indeed for the pleasantnesse and wittie Natration contayned in this Historie, the best learned in the Vniuersitie, or the finest head in all the Court

may

may well ſeeme and thinke no ti... to beſtow the reading thereof. Wherefo... Printer for publike commoditie, by the a... uiſe of ſome friends (this conſidering) not as chuſing the beſt, but with whome he thought he might be bould, requeſted mee to peruſe it throughout, which I haue done according to my ſimple ſkill by voyding and correcting the three faults before ſpecified.

Neuertheleſſe I haue not ſo much coueted to enterlace ſuch fine & eloquent engliſh as many haue vſed in our time, but rather to match the new peece with the old garment, as neere as might be, becauſe I had in correction moſt reſpect to perſpicuitie and breuitie in a Hiſtorie moſt agreeable and conuenient. Wherefore gentle and learned Reader, I ſhall deſire thee to take this my bould enterpriſe in good part, and if thou find ought amiſſe, friendly to correct the ſame, and to beare with my errour, *Cum ſit humanum.*

Here beginneth the [illegible]
rie of the Seuen wise Maisters of R[illegible]

Containing many pleasant and wit-tie Narrations very delectable to the Reader.

SOmtime in the City of Roome there was a famous Emperour named Pontianus, a man of great wisedome, he tooke to his wife a Kings Daughter that was verie faire, amiable, to all people gracious, and to her husband right deere, shee conceyuing of him, was deliuered of a Son named Diocletian. The Child grewe, and of all the people was beloued, and when he was of the age of Seauen yeres, his Mother the Empres falling sore sicke, and feeling her selfe that she might not liue, sent after her Lord the Emperour a Messenger that he should come without tarying if euer he would see her aliue. He

when hee was come, shee sayd vnto him, O my Lord, of this infirmitie I may not escape, wherefore I humbly require of you a little petition before my death: hee answered, desire what you will, for I shall not deny you any thing. Then sayd she, after my death you shall take another wife as is most conuenient, wherefore I instantly beseech you, that she ouer my sonne haue no power nor gouernance, but that hee bee kept and nourished farre from her, and that he may be trayned vp in learning and wisedome. The Emperour then answered, my most deere wife, your petition in all things shall be fulfilled and performed, then turned the Empresse and gaue vp the ghost. Many dayes after, the Emperour bewayled & mourned her death, and long after her burying, hee shewed his heauinesse and sorrow, and would in no wise marrie, or be ioyfull.

How

How the Emperor committed and
uered his Son to the Seauen wise Ma-
sters to be instructed in learning.

Vpon a time as the Emperour lay
in his bed, hee bethought him in-
wardly of his Sonne, saying in his
hart, I haue only but one Sonne, the
which shall be mine Heire, it is good
whiles hee is young, that he be set to
learne cunning and wisedome, by the
which he may after my death gouerne
and rule the Empire. So that when
hee was early risen vp from his bed,
hee caused to bee called the Lordes of
his Counsaile, and of them tooke ad-
uise what were best therein to be don.
And they answered, Lord in Roome
are seauen wise Maisters, who excell
and exceed all other men in cunning
and literature, let them be sent for, &
deliuer them your Son to be fostered
and instructed in learning. The Em-
perour vnderstanding that, sent his
Letters sealed with his Seale to the

seau

seuen maisters, that they incontinently should come to him without delay, and they anon came before the emperour, and he demanded of them if they knewe wherefore that he had sent for them: they answered, the cause is as your will intendeth, wee knowe not, but if it please you to shewe vs your minde and intent, we be readie to fulfill it to the vttermost of our powers: to whome the noble Emperour sayd, I haue but one son, the which I shall deliuer vnto you to nourish and to teach, so that by your Doctrine and wisedome, hee may the more wisely guide and gouerne the Empire after my decease. The first Maister named Partillas sayd. Lord deliuer to mee your sonne, and I shall teach him as much cunning within vii. yeeres, as I & all my fellowes can. Then spake the Second Maister named Lentulus, Sir of long time I haue serued you, and therefore I haue had no ma-

ner of reward, I demaund not
else of you, but that you deliuer me
your son to learne and gouerne, and
I shall make him as cunning within
six yeeres, as I and all my fellowes
be. The third Master named Craton
sayd, My Lord, many times haue I
been with you vppon the sea in perill
of my life, and of you haue I had no
maner of reward, if that I might for
my recompence nowe obtaine, that
you will vouchsafe to commit your
sonne vnder my rule and gouernance,
I should informe him as much with-
in fiue yeres, if his wit will thereto at-
taine, as I and all my fellowes can.
Then stoode vp the Fourth Maister
named Malquidrake, who was right
leane of bodie, and sayd, my Lord
call to your remembrance how that
I and al my Predecessors haue serued
Emperors, and haue receiued no ma-
ner of reward, wherfore I shall aske
no other thing, but that you will deli-

uer

ner mee your Son to informe & teach & I shall make him to take as much science & wisedome within iiii. yeeres as I and all my fellowes haue learned in all our liues. Then spake the Fift Maister that was named Iosephus, Lord I am ould, and many times I am called to your Counsell, and you know that my counsell hath auayled and profited you, and so yet in like wise may hereafter: notwithstanding I desire no more, but that you will deliuer me your Sonne, and I shall instruct and informe him in as much cunning and science, that he within three yeeres shall profit in wit as much as I & all my fellowes. Then came forth the Sixt Maister named Cleophas, who sayd like to the other, promising him to learn and informe the Child in all their cunning within two yeeres. The Seauenth Maister rose vp and sayd, who also desired the Child, and promised for to

learne

learne him within one yeere the sciences and wisedome of them all. When all this was done, the Emperour sayd, my trusty friends, I am much bounden to thanke you all, and euery of you, for that you haue so earnestly with contention desired to foster and instruct my sonne, If I should now commit him to one, and not to another, thereof should now ensue much dissention and variance among you. Therefore to you all and euery of you I commit my sonne to be norished, & taught. The Maisters hearing this, with great thankes-giuing to ỳ Emperour, tooke and receiued his Son, and ledde him towards the Court of Rome. Upon the way spake Craton to his fellowes, If wee this Child should teach within the Citie of Roome, there is so great resort and concourse of people, that it should hinder and lette him in his learning: I knowe a faire place from Roome

iii. miles, right pleasant and delectable, there let vs make a foure square chamber of stone, & put him therein, and vpon the walles thereof let vs paint and write the vii. liberall Arts so that the Child at all times may see and behould his doctrine therein, as well as in his booke: and this aduise & counsell pleased them all, and was done accordingly in euerie point. The Maisters diligently euerie daie during Seauen yeeres, taught and instructed the Child, and determined amongest themselues and sayd, it is good that we examine our Disciple, to see how he is sped in cunning and science, they all accorded to the same. Then sayd Maister Pantilias, how shall we proouue him? Craton sayd, let euery of vs as hee sleepeth, put vnder euerie corner of his Bed, an Olyue leafe, and then wee shall know if hee perceiued or felt any thing, or not: this done, he awaking, greatly mar-

nailed, and lifted vp his eyes toward the roofe of the Chamber feruently, the Maisters seeing that, said wherefore lift you vp your eyes so sharpely? hee answeared, it is no marualle, for in my sleepe I saw the vppermost part of the chamber inclyned toward the earth, or else vnder mee it was lift vp, the Maisters hearing this, sayd among themselues, if this Child may liue, hee shall bee a man of great cunning and fame.

How the Emperour by the counsaile of the great Princes and Lordes of his Empire, wedded another Wife.

THe Princes and great Lordes of the Empire, in the mean time came to the Emperour and said, my Lord, ye haue onely but one Son it is possible that he might happen to die, and therefore it were profitable that you should wed another wife to engender and make mo Children, to thintent that the Empire of Rome be

not

not left without an Heire. Moreouer ye are so mightie, that if it should happen you to get many Children, ye may promote and aduance them all to great Dignitie and Lordshippes. Thereupon answered the Emperor, it is your counsell that I shall take another wife, then seeke me one that is gracious, a pure virgine, faire & gentle borne, and then shal I follow your counsell and aduise. They went and sought and searched out many kingdoms and lands, and at the last they found the Kinges Daughter of Castile, that was right faire and beautifull, and her they gaue the Emperor to wife, who behaued her so well, that anon he was taken so sore in her loue that he forgate all the heauinesse and sorrow of his heart that hee had taken for the death of his first wife. And when they had liued long together without Children, and the Empresse sawe well that shee might not con-

conceaue. Then when she heard that the Emperor had a Sonne with seuen wise Maisters to bee fostered and taught to the behooke and profite of the Empyre, she thought in her selfe, and wished his death. And from that houre forth, shee imagined how shee might conspire his destruction. It happened on a night as ỳ Emperour lay in his bed, he sayd to the Empres, My most deere and best beloued wife, I shall now shew & open to you the secrets of my heart, for vnder the Sun is there no creature that I loue so wel as you, and therefore trust in my loue. Then sayd the faire noble Empres, if it be so as you say, I require of you one little boone or petition. Desire what you will sayd the Emperour, and all that to me is possible, I shall fulfill and giue it to you. Then sayd the Empresse, my right deere Lord, as you know I haue no child by you yet conceiued, wherefore I am sore

pensiue and heauie, but it is shewed me that ye haue one Sonne onely, the which is set to the Seauen wise Maisters to be taught and gouerned, and him hold I and repute for mine owne Sonne, wherefore I beseech you that yee will send for him that I may see him and haue consolation of his presence, as though hee were mine owne. Hereupon answered the Emperour, it is sixteene yeeres passed that I him last sawe, your will be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperour sent vnto the seauen Maisters a Letter sealed with his secret signet, that vppon paine of death they should bring his Sonne in the feast of Pentecost or whitsuntide then next following.

How the Seauen wise Maisters after the sight of the Emperors Letter wold first see the course of the Firmament and Planets, whether it were good to obey his commaundements, or not.

And

And as the Maisters the letter had
read, and had vnderstood the will
of the Emperour, in the night they
went and saw vppon the starrs of the
Firmament, whether it should be ex-
pedient to take the iourney with the
Childe after the Emperours will or
not; and they sawe secretly in the
Starres, that if they should leade
the Childe in that time assigned, at
the first word that hee should speake
he should die an euill Death: where-
fore they were all right sorrie, and
as they beheld another Starre, they
sawe, that if they deliuered not the
Childe at the day aforesayd, they
should loose their heads. Then sayd
one of them, of two euils the least
is to be chosen, it is better that all we
die, than that the Childe should loose
his life, therefore that wee may saue
the Childs life, let vs go to the Empe-
rour. And as they were thus sorrow-
full, the Childe came downe from the

chamber and saw his masters so heauie, hee demaunded then the cause of their heauinesse, whereupon they answered: Sir, we haue receiued your Fathers Letters, vpon paine of death that nowe in this high feast of Pentecost wee should leade you to your Countrey, whereupon we haue beholden the Firmament, wherin we clearly see and finde, that if we within the time before prefixed present you to your Father, at the first word that ye shall pronounce out of your mouth, ye shall bee to the most vylest death condemned. Then said the Child, I must also behould the Firmament with the Stars, and so he did, and found cleere in a little starre, that if hee could abstaine from speaking seauen daies, he should be preserued, and saue his life. And after he had seene this, hee called his Maysters, and shewed them the Star, and sayd, behold my dere Masters, I see perfectly in the starre that

if

ſt I abſtaine my ſelfe by the ſpace of vii. dayes I ſhall ſaue my life. We are now vii. Maiſters, the wiſeſt of all the world, it is a little thing to you, that euerie of you for mee one day doe aunſwere, and with your wiſe anſwere, euerie of you his day my life may ſaue and keep, & I in the viii. day ſhal ſpeak for my ſelfe, and ſhall ſaue my life, and all you from perill. As the Maiſters had beholden that certaine ſtar, they iudged in them, that the Child had ſayd troth, ſaying almightie God bee thanked, that the wiſedome and cunning of our Diſciple exceedeth vs all. Then ſayd the firſt Maiſter Panfillas, Lord I ſhall ſpeake for you the firſt day and ſaue your life: and Lanulus the ſecond Maiſter ſayd, I ſhall for you the ſecond day anſwere, and ſo conſequently euerie of them promiſed to aunſwere for him his day, and his ſayd, they cloathed the Child in purple, and leapt to horſebacke with a

faire companie, and hasted them with the Child to the Emperour.

Howe the Emperour rode to meete his Sonne comming from his Studie, with pompe and pride.

When the Emperour perceiued that his Sonne was comming vppon the waye, he rode with great ioye to meet him: the Maisters vnderstanding the comming of the Emperour, sayd vnto the Child, it is best that we depart, and in the meane while wee may prouide howe wee maye saue your life. The Child sayd, it pleaseth me that you doe so, but haue minde on mee in time of my necessitie: so they tooke their leaue, and departed towards the Citie, and the Child came after accompanyed right honorably. And as he and his Father the Emperour were mette, for ioye and gladnes he tooke him about the necke and kissed him, saide, my deare Son how

is

is it with you, it is long sithen that I sawe you, he bowed downe his head and answered nothing, the Father had great woonder why that he spake not, and thought in himselfe that his Maisters had him so informed, that hee ryding should not speake: and when they were come into the Pallaice, and were descended from their Horses, the Father tooke the sonne by the hand and ledde him into the Hall, and set him next him and beheld him and sayd, tell mee how it is with your Maisters, and how they haue informed you, for now is many yeeres sith I saw you: he inclined down his head and gaue no answeare: the Father sayd, wherefore speake ye not to me? And when the Empresse heard that y Emperours sonne was come she was right ioyous and glad, & saide I will goe see him, shee appareiled her with rich attire, and tooke with her two of her Gentlewomen, and went there

as the Emperour was sitting with his Sonne, she sate her downe by the Child, and she sayd to the Emperour, is this your Son, that hath been nourished with the seauen wise Masters, and he sayd it is my sonne but he speaketh not, she sayd deliuer to mee your Sonne, and if euer he speake, I shall make him to speake, then said the emperour, rise and go with her, the Son did reuerence to the father, as though hee sayd, I am readie to accomplish your will, and went with her.

How the Empresse ledde *Diocleſian* the Emperours Sonne with her into her chamber for to make good chere with him, the which he withstood.

The Empresse led him with her into her Chamber, and cõmanded all other to auoyd, & set him by her afore her bed, and sayd, O my best beloued Diocleſian, I haue heard much of your person and beautie, but now I am glad that I may see you

with

with mine eyen that my heart coue-
teth & loueth, for I haue caused your
Father to send for you, that I might
haue solace and ioye of your Person:
Wherefore I without fault giue you
knowledge that I for your loue vnto
this daye haue kept my Virginitie,
speake to mee, and let vs goe to bed
together, but hee gaue her no aun-
swere: She seeing that, said to him,
O good Diocleſian, which hast ỹ halfe
of my soule, why speake you not to me,
or at the least shew mee some token of
loue, what shall I doe, speake to me,
I am readie to fulfill and perfourme
your wil, and when she had thus said,
shee embraced him, and would haue
kissed his mouth, and hee turned his
visage from her, and in no wise would
consent, then sayd she againe to him,
O sonne wherefore doe yee thus with
me, behould there is none that may see
vs, let vs sleep together, and then shall
yee well perceiue, that for your loue I

haue

haue kept my Virginitie, and he tourned his Vilage from her, she seing that he was of her ashamed, shewed vnto him her naked bodie and breasts, and saide behould my Sonne what bodie I haue at your will, giue me your consent, or else it shall be hard for me to passe with my right mind: he neither with signe, or with countenance of vilage shewed her any maner of loue, but as much as shee could withdrewe him from her. When she saw that she saide, O my most sweet Sonne: if it please not you to consent to me, speake yet, perhaps for some reasonable cause, lo here is paper, pen, and yuke, if you will not speake with your mouth, then write your will, whether I maye anytime hereafter trust in your loue or not. The Child wrote as hereafter followeth, O Ladie, god forbidde that I should defile my Fathers Orchard, for I woe not what fruite I should haue of it, I knowe

well

well one thing that I should sinne in the sight of God, and also run in the malediction of my Father, and therefore from henceforth provoke or stirre mee no more thereto. When shee had seene and read the writing, she brake it with her teeth, and rent her cloathes with her nailes to her nauill, and all to scratched her Visage vntill it was all bloudie, and cast from her all the ornaments of her head, & cried with a loude voice, come hether my Lords & helpe me, afore that this rude and euill bodie shame and ravish me.

Howe the Empresse complayned to the Emperour of the shame to her by his Sonne.

THe Emperour was in the Hall, and hearing the crie and noyse of the Empresse, hee hastily ran toward his Chamber with his knights and other of his Servaunts following him, for to see what was the matter. Then beganne the Empresse

gan to cry, and to speake to the Emperour in this wise. O my Lorde, haue pitie and compassion vppon mee, behould this young man is not your Sonne, but the foulest Ribaud & harlot that euer was borne, and a defyler of women: for as you know well, I led and brought him with me into my Chamber, and would haue exhorted and caused him to haue spoken. I haue doone as much thereto as I can, or may, and whiles I with my wordes exhorted and mooued him for to haue spoken, hee hath endeauoured himselfe with mee to haue sinned, and because I would not to him consent, but withstoode as much as I might for to flee the shame, hee hath made my Visage all bloodye, and hath all to torne my Vesture, and Ornaments of my head, as you may openly see, and if yee had not so soone come vnto my calling, he had accomplished in mee his most fowle and

wicked

wicked appetite. When the Empe-
rour saw and heard this, filled with
great malice and woodnesse, he com-
maunded his Seruaunts that they
should lead him to the Gallowes, and
hang him, and when his Lords heard
thereof, they saide, Lord you haue no
more but this Sonne onely, it is not
good that yee thus lightly put him to
death, the Law is ordained for trans-
gressors and misdoers, and if it be so
that he must die, let him by the Law
die, least that it be sayd that the Em-
perour in his great furie and yre,
without Law and Justice, hath put
his onely Sonne to Death. As the
Emperour heard this, he commaun-
ded him to be put in Prison vntill the
time that Judgement were giuen a-
gainst him, And when the Em-
presse vnderstode that the Childe
was not put to Death, shee cryed and
weeped bitterly, and would haue
no rest: when the night was come,

the

the Emperour entred into the Chamber to goe to bed, and found his wife weeping and sorrowing, to whom he sayd: O my most decre Ladie for what cause are ye so sorrowfull? she answered, knowe you not how that your cursed Sonne hath don me this much shame, and me so offended, yet haue commaunded him to be hanged, and yet he liueth, and your word is not performed, neither is my shame reuenged. To morrow sayd the Emperor he shal die by the Law, then said shee, shall he so long liue? then might it happen to you, as it did vppon a Burgesse of Roome, of whome an example is mentioned: the Emperor sayd, I pray you shew me that example, that shall I doe gladly sayd the Empresse.

The First Example of the Empresse.

In the Citie of Roome was a Burgesse, the which had a faire

daine

daine, wherein hee hadde standing a noble Tree, the which euerie yeare brought forth fruite of great vertue, for wholoeuer eate thereof that were sicke of any manner of sickenesse, as of Leaprosie, or of any other, hee should soone be whole and receiue his health. It happened vppon a daye that the Burgesse went into his Gardaine to visite and see the Tree, and espyed vnder the Tree a faire young Impe, hee called to him the Gardiner and sayd: My friend, of this young impe I giue thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better Tree than this is. The Gardiner sayd, I shall it gladly doe. Another time the Burgesse came againe into his Gardaine for to visite this young plant, and it appeared vnto him that it grewe not so much as it should doe, and hee sayde vnto the Gardiner, how may this be? and hee sayd, it is no woonder, for this great Tree hath so great armes and

braunches

boughes, that the ayre may co
come to the roote of the young Tre
then sayd the Burgesse, cut and he
all the armes and the boughes, tha
the ayre may come thereto, the Ga
diner did as hee was commanded
The Burgesse came again at anot
time for to see his young plant, and
thought that hee grew neuer the bet
ter, and sayd to the Gardiner, wha
is it that letteth this Plant to grow
now? And then he said, I suppose th
height of y old Tree letteth the Sun
and the raine may not come thereto
and therefore it cannot grow. The
sayde the Master vnto him, hew
downe the Tree by the ground, fo
I hope of this plant to haue a bette
than euer this was. The Gardine
hearing his Master, obayed him
and he hewed downe the Tree, and
as soone as this was done, the young
Plant all wholly perished, and cam
to naught, wherefore came grea

harm

harme, for when the poore & the sicke people perceiued that the Tree was to destroyed, they curled all them that were as Councellors & helpers therto, by the which they all aforetime were healed and cured of their infirmities and maladies. Then sayd the Empres, vnderstand ye what I haue sayd? He answered, yes right well: then sayd she, I shall declare to you the meaning of that which I haue sayd.

The Declaration of the Example.

This Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your most noble Person, how that with your Councell and helpe, many poore and sicke folke are greatly holpen and comforted. And the young Impe which is growne vnder the great Tree, is your cursed Sonne, that nowe by his cunning beginneth to growe, and studieth how hee first may cut off the armes, & boughes of your might, & how to win to him the

laud and fauour of the people, yea
more vnnaturally, hee imagineth to
destroy your person, that he may him-
selfe raigne, but what shall then ensue
thereof? all poore and feeble people
shall curse all them, the which might
haue destroyed your Sonne and
not done it, therefore I counsell you
whilest you are in your power and
liuing, that yee destroy him, least that
the curse of the people fall vppon you.
Then sayde the Emperour, yee haue
giuen mee good councell, to morrow
I shall condemne him to the most
vilest death that can be thought: when
the daye was come, the Emperour
went and sate in iudgement and com-
maunded his Seruaunts that they
should lead his son to be hanged with
Trumpet blowing in token of death.
And as the Emperors Son was led
through the Citie, the common peo-
ple beganne to weepe and crye, alas
the onely Son of the Emperor is led

towards his death, and therewithall came Pantillas the first Maylter ryding vppon a Horse, when the Child sawe him, he bowed his head to him as though hee had sayd, haue minde vppon mee when you come before my Father, see how I am led towards the Gallowes, then the Maylter said to the Seruants, make no hast, for I hope by the grace of God this daye to deliuer him from the death, then sayd all the people: O good Maister hast you to the Pallaice, & saue our Disciple, he smote y horse with his spurs till he came to the Pallaice, and kneeled before the Emperour and did him reuerence. To whome the Emperor sayde, it shall neuer be to thee good, who answered, I haue deserued a better reward, the Emperour sayd there thou lyest, for I deliuered him to thee in all things well mannered, & now he is dumme, and that worse is, hee would haue oppressed my wife,

therefore this day hee shall die, and ye all shall die a shamefull death. The Maister sayd, O Lord, as for your sonne, for so much as he speaketh not, the cause thereof God knoweth, and without cause it is not, as ye shall vnderstand, and where you say that he would haue defyled your Empresse, I shall say to you of a troth, hee hath beene in our companie by the space of 16 yeres, and we neuer could perceiue such thinges by him. And therefore my deere Lord I shall shewe you one thing, that if you put your Sonne to death for the woordes of your Wife, it should happen to you worse than to a Knight, the which killed his best Greyhound through the woordes of his wife, which saued his Son from the Death: then sayd the Emperour to the Maister, tell me that example. The Maister sayd, Lord that shall I not doe, for before I should make an end therof, your sonne might be dead,

and

and then in vaine and without fruite I should rehearse it, but if it pleaseth you this notable example to heare, call againe your Son till to morrow and as yee thinke by reason, then doe with him your pleasure. As the Emperour heard that, anon he willed the Child to bee called againe, and in the meane time hee sette him in Prison whyles the Maister should finish his tale, and then he began to say in such manner as followeth.

The Example of the first Maister.

THere was a valiaunt Knight, which had onely one Sonne, as you haue, the which hee loued so much, that he ordained for his keeping three Nourishers: The first should giue him sucke and feede him, the second should wash him and keepe him cleane, and the third should bring him to sleepe and rest. This Knight had also a Greyhound and a Fawl-

con, which hee also loued right well. The Greyhound was so good, that hee neuer ranne at any game, but he tooke it, and held it till his Maister came. And if his Maister disposed him to goe vnto a battaile, if he should not speed in the battaile, anon as hee should amount vppon his Horse, the Greyhound woulde take the Horse tayle in his mouth, and drawe backward, and would also crie and howle maruailous loud. By these signes the Knight vnderstood if that hee should speede in his Journey or not. The Fawlcon was so gentle and so hardy that hee was neuer cast off his pray, but tooke it.

The same Knight had great pleasure in Justing and Tourney, so that vpon a time vnder his Castle hee proclaimed a Tournament, to the which came many good Lords and knights. The Knight entred into the Tourney, and his Ladie went with her maydens

maydens to see it, and as they went out, after went the Nourishers, and left the Child lying there alone in the Stadle in the Hall, where the Greyhounde laye nigh the wall, and that Hauke or Fawlcon standing vppon a Perch. In this Hall there was a serpent lurking or hidde in a hole, to all them of the Castle vnknowne, the which when hee perceiued that they were all absent, he put his head out of his hole, and when hee sawe none but the Childe lying in the Cradle, hee went out of his hole towards the Cradle for to haue slaine the Childe. The noble Fawlcon perceiuing that, and beholding the Greyhound that was sleeping, made such a noyse and rustling with her winges and feathers, that the Greyhound awooke and arose vppe, and when he sawe the Serpent nigh the Childe, anon against him he leapt, and they both fought so long together, vntill that

the Serpent had greeuously hurted and wounded the Greyhound, that he blead sore, so that the earth about the Cradle was all bloudie with the blood of the Greyhound. The Greyhound when that hee felt himselfe so greeuously wounded and hurt, start fiercely vppon the Serpent & fought so sore together and so eagerly, that betweene them the Cradle was ouerthrowne with the Childe, the bottome vpward. And because that the Cradle had foure Pomels like feete, falling towardes the earth, they saued the Childes life, and his visage from any hurting, what shall I say more? Incontinent thereafter with great pain the Greyhound ouercame and slue the Serpent, and went and layd him downe againe in his place, and licked his wounds.

And anone after as the Iusts and Tourney was done, the Nourishers were the first that came into the Castle,

stle, and as they saw the Cradle turned vpside downe, enuironed with blood on the earth, and that the Greyhound was also bloudy, they thought & sayd amongest themselues that the Greyhound had slaine the Child, and they were not so wise as to turne vp againe the Cradle with the Child, for to haue seen what was thereof befallen. But they sayd, let vs flee or run away, least that our Maister put or lay the blame vpon vs, and slay vs. As they were thus running away, they met with the Knights wife, and she sayd to them, wherefore make ye this sorrow, and whether will ye run? then sayd they, O Lady, woe and sorrowe be to vs and to you, why sayde shee, what is there happened, shewe me? the Greyhound, they sayd, that your Lorde & Maister loueth so much, hath deuoured and slaine your Son, and lyeth by the wall all full of the bloud. As the Ladie heard this, she

fell

fell to the earth and began to weep
and crie pitiously, and sayd, ala
O my deare Sonne be ye thus slain
and dead, what shall I nowe do
that I haue mine onely Sonne thus
lost: herewithall came in the knigh
from the Tourney, & beholding his
Ladie thus crying and making sor
rowe, hee demaunded of her where
fore that shee made so great sorrow
and lamentation: shee aunswearel
him, O my Lorde, your Greyhoun
that ye loue so much, hath slaine you
onely Sonne, and lyeth by the wal
saciate with the blood of the Child
The knight vehemently angred
went into the Hall, and the Grey
hounde went to mecte him, and
fawne as hee was wont to doe, an
the knight drewe out his Swor
and with one stroake smote off th
Greyhoundes head, and went to th
Cradle and found his Son all wh
and by the Cradle the Serpent slai

a

and by diuers signes perceiued that the Greyhound had fought against the Serpent for the defence of the Child. Then with great sorrow and weeping hee tare his haire, and sayd, woe bee to mee, that for the wordes of my wife, I haue slaine my good Greyhound, the which hath saued my Childes life, and hath slaine the Serpent: therefore I will put my selfe to penuance, and so hee brake his Sword in three peeces, and went towards the Holy land, and abode there all the dayes of his life. Then sayd the Maister to the Emperour, Lord, vnderstand yee what I haue sayd, and he answered and sayd, right well. The Maister sayd, if that ye do put your Son to death for the wordes of your wife, it shall happen to you, worse then it did to the knight for his Greyhound. The Emperour said, ye haue shewed me a faire example, and without doubt this daye shall not

my

my Sonne: then saide the Maister
if ye doe so, ye do wisely, but I thank
you that ye haue spared him this da
for my sake.

The Second Complaint of the Empresse.

When that the Empresse heard tha
the Child was not yet dead, she
began to weepe bitterly, and sate he
downe on the earth in ashes, & would
not lift vp her head: as the Empe
rour heard that, hee entred into th
Chamber & sayd to her, O good wif
wherefore make ye all this sorrow,
trouble your selfe so much. She sayd
aske you that of mee, know you no
well what great dispight and shan
I haue suffered of your vnhappie so
and how ye haue promised mee tha
you would see Justice to be thereto
on him executed, and yet he liued:
troth it shall happen to you as it hap
pened to a sheapheard & a Boye. Th
Emperour sayd, I pray you shew m

ye example for my learning, the said
s yesterday I shewed one and saw me
o effect that thereof came, to what
ntent should I nowe doe the like?
Neuertheles I shall declare this no-
able example vnto you, as hereafter
ou shall heare.

The Second Example of the Empresse.

There was sometime an Emperour
the which hadde a great Forrest,
herein was a Boze which was so
uell and so fell, that men going
hrough the Forrest, he killed and de-
oured. The Emperour being there-
ze right heauie, proclaymed tho-
ughout all his Dominions, that
hatsoeuer hee was that could slay
e Boze, shoulde haue his onely
aughter to wife, and thereto his
mpire after his death: and as this
as in places proclaymed, there
as not one man founde that durst
ue the aduenture: but there was

a Shepheard, which in himself thought, might I this Boze slay & winne, I should not onely aduan my selfe, but also all my generat and kindred. So he tooke his sh heardes staffe in his hand and w to the Forrest. And as the Boze h of him a sight, hee drewe him wardes the Heardsman, and hee feare clymed vpon a Tree, then t Boze begamne to bite and gnawe t tree, so that the heard thought sho ly that hee should haue ouerthrow it. This Tree was laden with gr plentie of fruite, the Heard gathe and plucked thereof, and cast th to the Boze, insomuch that when was filled therewith, hee layde h downe to sleepe, the which the hea perceiuing, by little and little desc ded the Tree, and with the one ha he clawed the Boze, and with the ther held himselfe vppon the Tr and seeing that the Boze slept sou

ly and fast, & we cut his knife and smote the Boze to the hart and killed hym, and so consequently wedded the Emperours daughter to his wife, & after ꝑ death of her Father, hee was made Emperor: then said she, my lord wot ye not what I haue sayd, he said, right well. Then said she, this mighty Boze betokeneth your most Noble Person, against whome may no man withstand, neither by wisedome, ne with strength. This shepheard with his staffe, is the Person of your vngracious Sonne, which with his staffe of cunning beginneth to play with you as the Heardman clawed the Boze, and made him to sleepe, and after killed him: in the same maner the Maysters of your Sonne by their false fables & narrations claw you, & glose with you, vntill the time that your Sonne slaye you, that hee may raigne. Then said the Emperor. God forbid that they should do to me

as hee did to the Boye, and saide vn
to her, this day my Sonne shall be
dead, and shee answeered, if ye doe
you doe wisely. Then the Empero
the second time sitting in Judgemen
commaunded to lead him to the Ga
lowes and hange him, and whilest h
was going, the second Maister cam
before the Emperor doing him reu
rence, as it is before shewed in th
comming of the first master, to who
the second Maister sayd. O my Lor
Emperour, if you should so slay yo
Sonne for the woords of your wife
might worse come to you, than it d
to a knight which for the woordes
his wife, was vniustly put vppon
Pillorie: the Emperor said, O goo
Maister tell me how it happened, a
he sayd, My Lord I shall not say
but that you will go call your Son
from the death vnto the time that t
example bee toulde, the which if
turne you not from your purpo
yo

your will be fulfilled. The Emperor commaunded that the Childe should be called againe. And vnder this maner that followeth, the second Maister began to tell.

The Example of the second Maister.

IN a City was an ancient knight which wedded a yong Wife and a faire as yee haue done, whome hee loued aboue all earthly thinges. This knight was a very circumspect and carefull Husband, insomuch that every night he locked in the doore with his owne hands, and layd the keyes vnder his beds head. In ỳ City was a lawe or custome, that at a certaine houre in the night a Bell was vsed to be rung, that after the ringing of the layd Bell, if any men or women were by the watchmen found vppon the Streets, all that night they should be kept fast in Prison, & on the morrow set vpon a Pillorie, that all the people might behould and wonder at them.

This foresaid Knight had litle mind or lust of fleshly deedes, for that hee was ould and might not saciate or perfourme the desires and appetites of his young Wife: wherefore euerie night shee (hauing a Paramour, her Husband sleeping) tooke the Keys and went to her loue, and when shee came againe, all priuily shee layd the Keys vnder her Husbands head and thus playde she many times. So it happened vppon a night, that the Knight awaked out from his sleepe and missed his Wife, & also the Keyes vnder his beds head: whereuppon hee arose vp and went vnto the Dooze and found them open, the which hee closed and boulted fast within, & then went vppe againe into his Chamber & looked out at the Windowe towards the Street: and when it was neere day, about the thirde Cockes crow his Wife came from her best beloued and found the Dooze shut and bolted within

within, then was shee sore wroth, neuertheleſſe shee knocked to haue come in. Then spake the knight out of the window, O thou most euill and vncleane wife, nowe I knowe and am expert that many a time thou hast forsaken my bed and gone and done adulterie, nowe thou shalt stand till the bell be rung, and that the watchmen may take thee, and do with thee according to the Law. The wife answeared, my Lord, wherefore say ye that to me, for in verie troth the cause of my being abroade was for no euill, but I was called by my Mothers Mayd, and fetched in the night, and when I sawe you sleepe so sweetely, I durst not awake you, because that ye are old, & therfore I tooke the keys and went to my mother, the which is sore sicke, that I feare to morrow she must be annointed or annelled: notwithstanding, for that I would not you offend, I haue hasted me againe

to you, and haue left her lying in great payne and infirmitie, therefore I pray you for the loue of GOD let mee in before the Bell ringeth. The Knight answered, he shall not so come in, ye must there abide vnto the time that the Bell ringeth, and vntill that the watchmen come & take you: then she said, that should be to you & to me and to all our freends and kindred a great shame and rebuke, therefore for the reuerence of almightie God let me come in: then saide hee, haue in thy minde euill and false wife, howe often times thou hast forsaken my bed and done adulterie, it is much better that thou suffer shame, & bewayle for thy sinnes here in this world, than for to suffer payne in Hell, shee sayd agayne to him, I pray you for the loue of him that was crucified, and died on the crosse, haue mercie on me, the Knight answeared, thou labourest in vain, for thou shall not come in, but shall tarie

the

the comming of the watchmen. She hearing that, sayde: My Lord, you knowe well that by this doore standeth a well, if ye let me not come in, I shall therein drowne my selfe, rather then all my frends should be shamed for me: then sayd he, would God that thou haddest beene drowned long before euer thou cammest in my bed. As they thus spake together, the Moone went down, & all was darke, then said she, if it will none otherwise be, I shall drowne my selfe, but yet afore, like a true Christian woman, I will make my Testament. First I bequeath to GOD my soule, and my bodie to bee buried in the Church of Saint Peter: and of all other things and goods that GOD hath sent mee, I giue vnto you to dispose for my Soule, after your wisedome and discretion. And when shee had thus sayd, she went to the well, and there lying a great stone, with both

hes armes, she lift vp, and sayd, now
I drowne my selfe, and cast the ston
downe into the well, and went again
priuily & stood by the doze: the knigh
hearing the noyse, cryed with a loud
voice, saying: Alas, alas, my wif
is drowned, and hastily came down
and ranne to the Well, and when sh
saw that the Doze was open, and
she entred in and locked the gate, an
went vp to the Chamber, and lay and
looked out of the window: the knigh
stood by the Well and cried and wep
bitterly and sayd, woe bee to mee,
haue nowe lost my most best beloue
Wife, cursed be the time that I mad
fast the doze against her. The Lad
heard that and sayd, O thou cursed
ould Greylard, why standest thou
there this time of night, was no
my bodie to you sufficient? Where
foze goe yee thus euerie night out t
your Harlots and your whoores, an
leaue my Bed? As he heard the voic

of his Wife, he was right glad, and sayd, blessed bee God that yet she is not drowned: but my good Ladie, wherefore lay you such things against me, I thought to haue chasticed you, and therefore I locked the Doore, but in no wise I intended your perill, yee knowe well what sorrow I made for you, when I heard you to haue fallen in the Well, & therfore I came lightly to haue holpen you. Whereupon she sayd, thou lyest falsely, I neuer committed such default as thou layest to me, but it appeareth by a Common Prouerbe, he that is guilty or culpable himselfe in a sin, he iudgeth euery man to be in the same, or else the Father neuer sought his sonne in the Ouen, except he had beene therein himselfe: so in like case conceauest thou a false surmise of me, but one thing I promise thee, thou shalt abide there vntil the Watchmen come, and the Bell bee runge, that they may lead

thee before the Judges to abide and suffer the Law. Then said ỳ knight, wherefore lay you such things to me that am old, impotent, and most vnmeet to delight in such game? I haue been conuersant in this Citie and neuer was defamed, and therefore let me in, that to me or to your selfe ye doe no shame. She said, ye speak in vain, it is better ỳ ye forethinke your sins in this world, than in Hell, haue in minde what the wise man sayeth, a poore man proude, a rich man a lyer, an old man a foole, God hateth: so be ye a foole & rich, what neede was it to you for to slaunder me, and cannot be content when as yee haue the flower of my youth at your pleasure, but yet runnest to Harlots, and therefore it is the great grace of God that you haue time and space for to forethinke it, least yee should perish and be damned for more sinns, and for that suffer your pennance patiently. The knight

sayd

sayd, O my best beloued Ladie, although it be so, yet is God merciful, and he alketh nothing of a sinner, but that he amend his life, and forethinke himselfe, and doe penance for his sins. Nowe let mee come in: I will make amends, she sayd, what Diuell hath made you so good a Preacher, but so come you not in, and as they thus spake, the bell rang, then he intreated fervently, saying, nowe suffer mee to come in that I bee not shamed for ever: she answered, the ringing of the Bell pretendeth the health of your soule. And as this was said, came the Watchmen about the City, and found the Knight standing in the street, and sayd to him, O good man it is not good that ye stand here in this houre of the night. As she heard the voice of the Watchmen, shee sayd: Good fellowes benge me on that vuld accursed Whoremunter: for yee knowe whose Daughter I am, this cursed old man

is

is wont euery night to leaue my bed
and go to his whores and harlots, I
haue long forborne him, and would
not shew it, ne complaine vppon him
to my Freends, for I trusted that he
would haue amended his misrule
and it helped not, and therefore take
him and punish him after the Law
that all such old Doters may take ex
ample by him. Then the Watchmen
tooke him, and all night chasticed him
in prison, and on the morrow they put
him on the Pillorie. Now said ỳ mai
ster to the Empersur, Lord haue yo
vnderstoode what I haue sayd, & he
said, right well. Then sayd ỳ maist
if you put to death your son by the in
stigation of your Wife, it shall chan
to you worse than to the Knight.

The Emperour sayd, she was th
worst woman that euer I heard o
that so falsely brought her Husban
to shame and rebuke: I say vnto yo
Maister, that for the reason of th

exam

example my Sonne shall not die this day. The master said vnto him, if you doe so, then doe you wisely, and that hereafter you shall ioy: & so I commit you to God, and thanke you of your patient hearing, and for the sparing of your Sonne, and so departed.

The Third complaint of the Empresse.

When the Empresse heard that the Childe was not dead, shee wept bitterly, and entred into her priuie Chamber, and tare her skin with her nayles, and with a loude voice cryed alas that euer I was borne, that I so great a Kings daughter shold thus be entreated and shamed, and thereof can haue no remedie: her Gentlewomen this hearing, went and shewed it to the Emperor, & hee went vnto her and comforted her saying. O Ladie, weepe not so, ne crie not, for it becommeth you not. Who answered, the loue that I haue and owe vnto you,

maketh

maketh mee more sorrow than t
contempt of the death, for why the
ward loue of your heart hath hether
prohibited and letted me that I ha
not returned agayne into my Cou
trey to my Father, but I feare if
should so doe, it might turne you
harme, for hee is mightie to hono
mee with riches, and to reuenge
quarrell & despight in such wise th
you might repent it. Whereto said
Emperour, let that passe out of yo
minde, neither repeate it any more,
as long as I liue, I shall neuer fa
you. And she sayd, Lord I pray
that ye may long liue, but I feare
that it shall happen to you as it
to a Knight & his Sonne that wou
not burie his Fathers head in
Churchyard, and yet his Father w
for him slaine: then sayd the Empe
shew mee y example how it was th
he would not bury his Fathers he
she sayd, I shall doe it to your pro

The Third Example of the Empresse.

In the Citie of Roome there was a knight which had two Daughters and one Sonne. This knight had so great delight in hunting, Justing and iourney, that all thing that he might win & get, he laid it and spent it thereupon. In that time liued the Emperour named Octauian, which in riches of gold and siluer exceeded all other kinges and Princes, insomuch that he had a Tower full of Gold, & ordained a knight to haue the keping & charge thereof. This knight that so haunted Justing & other idle games, came to so great pouerty, that he was disposed to sell his heritage, and called to him his son, and said, my Son behoueth me of your counsell, for necessitie and pouerty compelleth me to sell mine heritage, or else to finde another waye by which I may liue, for if I should sell mine heritage, ye & your

your Sisters should perish. The t
sayd, Father if ye can find any ma
of meane without selling of our He
tage, I should be readie to helpe y
The Father sayd, I haue thou
vppon a good Councell, The Em
rour hath a Tower full of Gould,
night time let vs go thether with
struments, & digge and hew thoz
the Tower, and let vs take of ỹ Go
as much as shall suffice vs. Wher
answered the son and said, that cou
saile cannot be amended, foz it is b
ter of the Emperours Gould to ta
to helpe vs, than to sell our herita
So they arose vp both in a night, a
went to the Tower, and with instr
ments they made a hole through t
wall, and tooke as much Gould
they both could carrie away at th
time, and the Knight payd his de
and haunted againe Iusts, as h
did before, vntill all was spent, a
consumed. In the meane whyle, t

Keep

keeper of the Treasure went into the Tower, and when he saw the Treasure stolen, and a great hole made through the Wall, he began to waxe sore afraid, & went to the Emperour and shewed how it was befallen: to whom the Emperour said all angerly what needest thou to shewe that, haue I not delyuered to thee my Treasure, and therefore of thee I will aske it. Anon as the keeper heard that, he went to the Tower again, and set afore the hole a great vessell full of Pitch, medled with other gins so subtilly, that no man might come in at that hole, but that he must needes fall into that vessell, and if hee did therein fall, hee could no more come out of it. Not longe after, the Knight had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went againe with his Son to the Tower to steale more Gold. And as the father went in first, anon hee was fallen into the vessell with Pitch to the

necke

necke, and when he saw that he was
taken and could not get out, he said
to his Son, follow me not, for if thou
doest, thou canst not escape by any
means: then said the son, God defend
it that I should not help you, for if ye
are found, we are al but dead, & if thou
ye may not bee holpen by mee, I shall
seeke counsaile how that you may be
deliuered & holpen. The father said,
there is none other councell but with
thy sword smite off my head, and when
my bodie is found without an head
no man shall know mee, and so thou
and my Daughters may scape, and
voide this worldly shame and death.
The sonne said, father ye haue giuen
the best counsell, for if it were so, that
any man might perceiue any know-
ledge of you, none of vs should escape
that death; and therefore it is expe-
dient that your head bee smitten off
anon bee we out his sword and
smote off his Fathers head and c

t into a pit, and then went and shew-
d vnto his Sisters all the matter,
who many dayes after priuily be-
wayled the death of their Father. Af-
er this the Keeper of the Treasure
ame into the Tower, and found a
Bodie without any head, whereat
e wondred sore, and shewed it to the
Emperour: to whome hee saide, bind
hat body at the tayle of an Horse, and
o drawe it by all the Streets of the
Citie, and diligently take good heed
f ye heare any cry or weeping, where-
euer yee heare that, hee is Lord of
he house, take all them, and with the
odie, drawe them to the Gallowes,
nd hang them. The which the Em-
erours Seruaunts fulfilled accor-
ing vnto his Commaundement: and
s they came against the house of the
ead Knight, and as the Daughters
awe the bodie of their dead Father,
ey made a marualous great shrike
nd wept pityously, and as their

mother heard that, anon he wounde
him selfe in the mouth with a knife,
that great plentie of blood came o
of the wound, the Officers when th
heard the crie, entred into the Hou
demaunding the cause of their cl
mour: then answered the Son, th
lament because I am thus wounde
for when my Sisters saw my blod
aboundantly goe out, as yee see, th
began to weepe & crye, and when t
officers saw the wound, they beleeu
his wordes, & so deceiued, went the
waies and hung the Knightes bo
vpon the Gallowes, where he hung
long time, and his son would neith
take his bodie downe from the Ga
lowes ne yet burie his head. T
Empresse said, vnderstand ye what
haue said, the emperor said, right w

The Declaration of the
Example.

THen spake the Empresse thus, m
Lord, I feare it will chance of y
an

and of your Son, this Knight for the loue of his son was made poore, and first hee committed theft, and brake the Tower: secondarily caused himselfe to be headed, that his Children should haue no shame, after the Son cast his head into a Dike, and buryed it not, neither in church nor in churchyard, his bodie hee suffered to hange still vppon the Gallowes: if that he could not haue taken it downe in the day, he might well haue done it in the night. In the same manner ye labour night and day, that ye may promote your Son to honor & riches, but without doubt he dayly labourcth for your confusion and destruction, that hee may raign after you in your Empire. Therfore I aduise you that you cause him to bee hanged before hee destroy you: the Emperour sayd, you haue shewed mee a good Example. The Knights Sonne when he had smitten off his Fathers head, would not

burie it, without doubt my Sonne shall not doe so by mee, but hee anon commaunded his Officers that they should leade him to the Gallowes, & they all obeyed his commaundement hastily, and as they led him through the Streets, the people made great noyse and lamentations, crying, alas alas, the onely Son of the Emperour is led againe towards the Gallowes. And as they led him, the thirde Maister named Craton, came ryding vpon a Horse, and as the child saw him he bowed downe his head to him, as though he had sayd, haue minde vpon mee, the people cryed, saying: O good Maister hast you, and saue your Disciple, he smote his horse with his spurs, and hasted him to the Pallaice. And when hee came before the Emperour, honourably saluted him who sayd, thy comming hether shall neuer auaile thee, for I thinke it long till I be reuenged of thee: the Maister sayd, I hoped in my comming to haue

been welcome, and haue had a better rewarde, and not haue been rebuked. The Emperour sayd, as ye haue deserued so shall it be to you. To whom he sayd, My Lord what haue I deserued? the Emperour sayd, ye right well deserue death, for I deliuered to you my Sonne well speaking, & well mannered, for to be informed and taught, and ye haue deliuered him againe to me dum and a ryband. To whom the maister said, in that you say he is dum, that I commit to God, for he maketh the dumme to speake, and the deafe to heare, but in that you say hee would haue inforced your wife, that would I gladly knowe, if any creature haue that seene, for there is no malice aboue the malice of a woman, and that shal I proue by a good example, that women bee full of leasings and deceptions, and if ye put to death your Sonne for the words of your wife, it shall happen to you

as it did to a Noble man, of his wi
and of his Pie, the which hee lou
marualously. To whom the Emp
rour sayd, I pray you tell mee ho
that women are full of malice and le
singes, who sayd, I will not she
it: but if you first call againe your s
from the death, then at your ple
sure I shall shew the example. Th
the Emperour anon made his S
to bee called againe, and to be put
prison. Then the Maister began
say this example in this fourme fo
lowing.

The Example of the thirde Maister.

THere was in a City a rich Bu
gesse that had a Pie, the whi
hee loued so much, that euer
day hee taught her to speake Lat
and Hebrue: and when she had le
ned very perfectly to speake these t
languages, al that she saw and hea
she shewed and tould to her Maist

The

This man had a faire young wife as ye haue, the which he loued much, but shee on the contrarie loued not him, because hee might not fourniſh her of ſuch pleaſures and luſtes as ſhe deſired to haue, and therefore had ſhee another faire young man that ſhee loued aboue her Huſband, and alwayes as her Huſband was out of the Towne about his Marchandize and other buſineſſe, ſhe ſent for her beſt beloued, that they might together make good cheere. The Pie as ſhee that eſpyed, told it vnto her Maiſter at his home comming, in ſuch wiſe, that the noyſe ranne all ouer the Citie of her adulterie: wherefore her huſband many times brabled and chyd with her, ſhe anſwered him, ye beleiue your curſed Pie, which as long as ſhee liueth, ſhall alwayes make betwixt vs variance and diſcord: and hee ſayde, the Pie cannot lye, for what ſhee ſeeth and heareth,

that shee telleth me, and therefore
beleeue her more than you: it fortune
that this man went into farre Cou
tries to doe his Marchandize, and
sone as he was gone, his wife sent
her friend and Loue to solace & ma
good cheere with him, but hee du
not come by day light, but abode
the Euening, least that he should
seen & marked of the people: when
night was come, hee knocked at
gate, and she was ready and open
it, and sayd, goe in freely, for no m
shall see you, & he said, I feare me th
the curled Pie shall accuse vs, for
her is come great slaunder vppon
throughout all the Citie, enter in
sayd boldly and feare not, and as th
should passe through the Hall whe
the Pie was in her Cage, shee hea
say these words, O my most belou
I feare mee greatly of the Pie, th
shall bewray vs. And as the
heard that, shee sayd, be still foole, i

dar

darke she may not see you. Then the Pie hearing that, saide, if I see thee not, yet I heare thy voice, and thou doest wronge to my Master, for thou sleepest with my Mistresse, and when my Master commeth I shall tell him. The young man hearing that, sayd, told I not you that the Pie should discouer vs? And the wife sayd, feare not, for this night wee shall bee auenged on the Pie, and so entred into the Chamber & slept together that night. About midnight the wife arose and called to her Mayd and sayd, fetch mee a Ladder and set vp to the roofe of the houle, that I may wreake me vppon the Pie, the Mayd did euen so, and they both went vp & made an hole through the couering of the houle right ouer against the Pie, and therethrough cast Sand, clay, stones, and water vppon the Pie, insomuch that the poore Pie was neere dead. And on the Morrow the young man

went

went earely out at a backe doze, a
when the good man was commi
home, as his custome was, hee we
and visited his Pie, and sayd to h
O Pie my beloued bird, say mee ho
thou hast fared the whiles that
haue beene out. She sayd, Mai
I shall tell you tydings that I ha
heard, your wife as soone as y
were gone, by the night time she le
a man come in, and as soone as
heard that, I told him that I wou
shew it to you at your comming ho
yet notwithstanding shee led him in
your Chamber, and slept with him a
night: you asked me also, howe th
I haue don in your absence, and I s
to you of a troth, that I was neuer
nye my death as I was ỹ same nig
with snow, hayle, and raine, that f
vppon my bodie, so long during, th
I was almost left for dead. T
wife when shee heard that, sayde
her Husband, Sir you beleeue yo

Wi

Pie, now may ye heare what she saith she complaineth that in the same night, there fell so much snow, hayle, and raine vppon her, that shee was almost dead, & yet there was none of them all that same night, for there was not in a yeere a fairer, nor a cleerer night than it was, & therfore from henceforth beleiue her not: then went the good man to his Neighbors, and asked of them, if that night were any Tempest or raine: they answered that some of them had walked all the night, and in all that yeere they had not seene a fairer night, then went hee to his house, and said to his wife, I haue found you in the troth, for the night was faire and cleere, as I vnderstand of your Neighbors, you may nowe knowe of a troth sayde she the Pie is a lyer, with her leasings shee hath sowne and made discord betwixt vs, and moreouer I am defamed through the Citie by her false lea-

leasings, then the Burgesse went t
to the Pie and sayd : wherefore h
thou made lyes & false tales betw
mee & my wife, is this the thanke th
I haue for ỳ meate that I was wo
to giue thee with mine owne han
euerie day, and thou hast also there
brought my wife into great infam
tion, through all the towne. The P
answeared, God knoweth I cann
lye, for that I saw and heard, ha
I shewed vnto you: then sayd he, th
lyest, hast thou not sayd vnto me th
in that same night was Haile, a
Snowe, and raine, that thou hadd
neere hand lost thy life, which is fal
And therefore from henceforth th
shalt make no more leasinges ne d
corde betwixt me and my wife, a
tooke the Pie and brake her neck
As the wife saw that, shee was gla
& sayd, now haue ye done well, no
may wee all our life dayes liue in re
and peace. And when he had slai
th

he Pie, he looked vp and saw in the
op of the house a Ladder, and a vef-
ll with water, sand and stones, and
s hee beheld that, hee perceiued the
dshood of his wife, and cryed with
loude voice, woe be to me, that for
ny wiues wordes, I haue slaine my
Pie, and also my solace and ioy lost, ỹ
hich in all thinges sayd to me troth.
nd as hee had thus done, anon for
rrow he left his Marchandize, and
l his house, and went towardes the
oly land, and neuer turned againe
wardes his wife: then the Maister
yd to the Emperour, sir, haue you
derstoode what I haue sayd, hee
nswered right well: the Maister said
as not that a false and cursed wife
at so by her leasings caused the Pie
be slaine. The Emperour sayd, in
oth she was full of falsenesse, it piti-
h mee greatly to thinke vppon the
ie, the which for her true saying,
st her life. Verily I say vnto
you,

you, that you haue told mee a faire e
ample, therefore this day my Son
shall not die: then sayd the Maist
Sir you doe wisely, and I than
you that you haue spared your S
this day for my will, and to God
commend you.

The Fourth Complaint of the Empresse.

When the Empresse heard that t
Childe was not yet dead, s
made great noyse and crying, in su
wise that she was heard throu
the Pallaice, and sayd, woe bee u
me that euer I was made Empres
would to God I had dyed when
was first brought into these parte
When the Emperour heard the noy
and crie that she made, hee entr
into the Chamber, and comfort
her as much as hee might, and d
maunded the cause of her lament
tion, which sayd: O mine own
Lord, haue you no wonder, thoug
tha

that I bee in this sorrow and agony, for I am your Wife, and in your company by your sonne I am ashamed, and yee saw me lately all be bled and scratched, and you haue promised me that hee therefore should bee hanged, and yet hee liueth, wherefore should I not be sorry, the emperour answered, be content and pleased, and I shal doe Iustice vpon my Son to morrow but in that I forbare him yesterday, was at the mouing of one of my Maisters, by an example: then sayd shee, haue yee forbid to doe Iustice for one word, were it so for all the world, yee should not let to doe Iustice, and ye say for the example of one Maister you haue left it. I feare me it will happen to you & with your Maisters, as vpon a time it fortuned to an Emperour with his seauen wise Maisters. The Emperour sayd, I pray you tell mee that example. Shee sayd, to what intent should I labour in

vaine

vaine, for Yesterday I shewed you good example, and it auaileth no for whatsoeuer I shew for your h nour and profite, that the Mayste of your Sonne, turne vp and dow to your destruction, as in this p sent example I should clearely shew you: to whome the Emperour say O my best beloued Ladie, tell me th example, that by the same I may t better beware, for though that I r spited my Sonnes life for one day, shall not therefore giue him his li for that which is deferred, is not the fore auferred: and she sayd, gladly shall shew it you for your profite, a beganne to tell it as hereafter fo loweth.

The Fourth Example of the Empresse.

SOmetime was within the Ci of Rome seauen wise Masters, whome all the Empire was g uerned and ruled, and the Empero tha

that then was, did or attempt no-
thing without the councell of the
Maysters, as they vnderstood that,
the Emperour was so to them incli-
ned, that without them he should or-
dayne or doe nothing, in the meane
time they made by their Art and cun-
ning, that the Emperour should
clearely see as long as hee was in the
Pallaice, but as soone as he was out
of the Pallaice he was made blinde,
and that did they, to the intent that
they might the more freely haue the
dealing themselues of all things that
appertayned to the Emperour, by the
which they got and wanne to them
great profit and lucour of goods, and
after they had made and wrought the
experiment, they could neuer chang
it ne vndoe it afterwarde, but the em-
perour abode still blind many yeares.
Then the vii. Maisters made and
ordained through out the empire, that
if any man had dreamed a dreame,

hee should come vnto them with
flozen of Gold oz Siluer, & they sho
expound & declare vnto them the i
terpretation of their dreames, whe
by and by other vniust meanes, th
obtayned much moze substance an
Money of the people, than the Em
peroz did: so vpon a time when he s
at the table with the Empzes, he b
gan to sigh and sozrow in himsel
and when she perceiued that, she e
quired diligently of him the cause
his heauinesse & dolour, the Emper
sayd, should not that to mee be heau
& sozowfull, that I so long haue be
blind, & cannot see out of my pallai
and yet can haue oz finde no remedi
To whom spake the Empzes & sai
Lozd heare my counsaile, and it sh
neuer repent you if you doe thereafte
In your Court you haue seauen w
Maysters, by whome yee and all t
Empire is gouerned, if you now b
hould and marke this in your min

yee shall finde that they are the cause of your blindnesse and disease, and if it bee so they are worthy to die a shamefull death, therefore take heede to my Counsell and aduise. send you for them, & shew to them your disease & infirmitie, & threaten them on paine of their liues that they should finde a remedie to make you whole of your sickenesse and blindnesse. This counsaile pleased the Emperour well, and anon sent for the Maisters, and when that they were come, the Emperour anon shewed to them his infirmitie, and blindnesse, and charged them on paine of death, that they should seeke a remedie, & make him whole thereof. Then answered they, ye desire of vs a thing that is difficult and hard for vs to doe thus shortly, but giue vs respite and dayes, and the tenth day wee shall giue you an answere. The Emperour was therewith well content and pleased, then the seauen wise

Maysters went to counsell how they might restore vnto him his sight a-gaine, and in no manner of wise could they finde the meane howe to put away the blindnes from the Emperor, wherefore they were all right sorowfull, and sayd among themselues, without wee finde a remedie, we are all but dead men. So went they from thence throughout all the Empire, and sought if they could find any remedie or councell therefore. It happened then vppon a time, going through a Citie, and in the midde thereof they found Children playing, & after them came a man with a table or flozen of gold, and sayd to them, good Maisters, this night I haue dreamed a dreame, the interpretation thereof I would fayne know, wherefore I pray you shewe mee what it signifieth, and take this gold to you. That heard one of the Children that played among the other, and sayd to him

him: giue me the Gold, and then I shall expound thy dreame. The man sayd, I dreamed this night that in the middest of the Orchard, was a great spring of Water, whereof came many small springs, that all mine Orchard was full and ouerflowne with water, the Child sayd, take a Spade and digge in the same place whereas ye thought that the water sprange out, and there shall yee find an Hoord of Gould so great, that ye and all your Children and Lineage shall bee for euer rich, the man did as the Child had shewed him, and found the Treasure according to his wordes. Then went the man to the Childe and offered him a pounde waight of the Gould that hee had founde, for the interpretation of his dreame, and hee would none receiue, but committed him to the prayers of the man. The seauen masters, when they heard the Childe so wisely ex-

pound the dreame, they sayd to him
good Child, what is your name? He
answeared and sayd, I am calle
Marline. Then sayd the Maysters
we see cleerely great wisedome in you
wee shall shew vnto you a great mat
ter, and of that we would gladly tha
ye could find a remedie. The Chil
sayd, shew vnto me your matter, an
they sayd, the Emperour of Rome a
long as he is in the Pallaice hath hi
sight verie cleere without any impe
diment, and as soone as hee is go
out of his Pallace, he is so blind, tha
he may not see. If yee can nowe de
termine the cause thereof, and find
remedie that hee may bee eased, an
haue his sight againe, yee shall hau
great reward and honour of the Em
peroz: then answered ỹ child, I kno
alwell the cause of his blindnesse, a
the remedie. They sayd vnto him
come with vs to the Emperour, an
yee shall be rewarded so largely, tha

yee shall be pleased. To whome the Child sayd, I am readie to goe with you. And when they came with the Child before the Emperour, they sayd to him: Lord, lo here is the child that we haue brought before you, the which shall fulfill your desires touching the cause of your blindnesse, and the recouering of your sight: the Emperour sayd, good Maysters will you take it vpon you and abide thereby, that the Childe shall perfourme this attempt. They all said yea, for wee be expert in his wisedome. The Emperour turned himselfe towards the Child, and said, will ye vndertake to tell mee the cause of my blindnesse, and the remedie? the Child answered and sayd, my Lorde the Emperour, leade mee into your Bed chamber, and there I shall shewe you what is to be done, and as hee was therein brought, hee sayd to the Seruants, take off the clothes of the bed, and all

the apparell, & ye shall see woonders.
And as that was done, they sawe
Well smoking that had seuen spring
or Flouds, the which when the Em-
perour sawe, he marueyled greatly
The Child sayd, yee see this Well,
without it be quenched, ye shall ne-
uer haue your sight, the Emperor sai
howe may that be: the Childe sayd
but by one way: the Emperour sayd
shewe vs then the meane, and if it be
possible to me, it shall be done, that
may recouer againe my sight, as wel
without as within. To whome th
Child sayd, My Lord the vii. spring
of this Well, are these Seauen wis
Masters, who hetherto haue Tray
terously gouerned you and your Em-
pire, and haue made yee blind as
bee without your Pallaice, that the
your subiects by extortion might p
and poule, ye not seeing it. But no
they know not the remedie, therefo
heare you now my counsaile, and th

Well

well, shall bee quenched and extinct, strike off the first Maisters head, and anon yee shall the first spring quench, and so by order one after another, till that they are all beheaded, and anon all the springs with the well shalbe banished and gone away, and ye shal haue againe your sight as yee had before: and when this was done & fulfilled, the well with the seuen springs were banished. And as the Emperor had his sight againe, hee made the Child a great Lord, and gaue him great aboundance of goods: and after spake the Empres, my Lord haue yee well this Example perceiued that I haue tould you, and he sayd, yea in the best wise, ye haue recited a worthy and good Example. Then sayd he, in the same maner your seuen wise Maysters intend to doe with you, with their false narrations that your Sonne may raigne ouer our empire, which God forbid,

The

The Declaration of the Example.

This Well is your Sonne, where out floweth vii. Springs that signifieth the Seauen wise Maisters the which Son yee may not destroy without the seauen wise Maisters be made feeble and brought to naught that done, this Well, that is your Son with all his wyles shall not escape but let him bee hanged first, least he haue helpe of his Maisters, and after consequently the seuen Masters, and so you shall gouerne and guide your Empire in rest and peace. The emperour anon commanded his Seruants to lead his Sonne to the Gallowes, which they were loath to doe. So was there then a great multitude of people gathered with great noyse & bewayling, so that the noise came to the eares of the Fourth Master named Malquidrake, the which leapt vpon his Horse, and hasted him

to the Pallaice. So met with him his Disciple, & did reuerence to him, and commended him vnto him, and when hee came before the Emperour, and had done his obeysance and reuerence as appertained: the Emperour answeared and sayde, little thanke haue you, ye ould cursed Caitiffe for the teaching of my Sonne. I deliuered you my Sonne wel speaking, in all thinges right vertuous, and you haue sent him a foole, dumbe, and a Rybaud, for hee would haue layne by force with my wife, and therefore all yee with him together shall be hanged. Then said the Maister, my Lord, I haue not deserued ỹ of you: God knoweth why your Son speaketh not, in short time shall you perceiue other thinges, but the time is not yet come, but in that you say, hee would haue oppressed your wife, that is not Gospell nor proued, neither for one singuler person, you shold

iudge

iudge your Sonne to death, If not
for the wordes of your wife, ye iudge
your Sonne to die, it will bee worse
to you, than to a certaine old man and
his wife, and that I shall well proue.
To whom the Emperor sayd, thinke
you to doe with mee yee old Doters,
as sometime seuen wise men did to an
Emperour. Thereunto sayd the
Maisters, the offence and trespasse of
one, or yet of Twenty, may not sound
to the rebuke and blame of all other,
for ouer all the world there bee both
good and euill, but one thing of
troth I shall shew to you, that euill
shall come to you if yee this day put
your Sonne to death for the wordes
of your wife, the which I could shew
by a notable example. Then said the
Emperour, will ye that recite for our
learning: the Maister sayd, if ye will
call again your Sonne, and keep him
till I haue made declaration of the
example, (then whatsoeuer yee shall

thinke

thinke best to doe with him, doe it) I shall rehearse this example, or else not. The Emperor commanded that hee should be called againe, and hee desired the Maister to say, as hereafter followeth.

The Example of the Fourth Maister.

THere was an ould Knight, and a right wise man, that long lived without wife and Child.

His Freends came to him many times and counsayled and exhorted him that hee should take a Wife.

The Knight thus counsailed, and stirred by his Friends so often times, at the last he agreed to them, and they gaue him to Wife the Daughter of the Prouost of Roome, that was rich and right faire, whome when hee had seene, anon hee was made blind and taken in her loue, and beganne to loue her maruayloully well, and when they had been a certaine

taine ſpace together, & had no Chil
Uppon a time in a moꝛning it happ
ned that ſhee went to the Churc
where ſhee mette with her Mothe
and ſaluted her as it behooued, m
deare Daughter ſayde the Mothe
how pleaſeth you your mariage, an
your Huſband: ſhee ſayd, right euil
foꝛ yee haue gíuen to mee an old lam
man, to my diſcontentation in all r
ſpects, I would you had the ſam
time buryed mee, foꝛ I had rath
lye and eate with a ſwine, than wit
him, and thereforze I may no lon
ger thus endure, but I muſt lou
another: then ſayd the Mother, go
foꝛbid that my deere Daughter, ho
long time haue I been with your Fa
ther, and yet neuer hetherto I medl
me with ſuch fooliſhnes, the Daugh
ter ſayd: Mother it is no maruaile
foꝛ you both in your youth met tog
ther, & the one toke ſolace of the othe
and I may receiue of him no manne

of corporall pleasure, for he is cold on the bed he lyeth as still as a stone, or as a thing immooueable, the Mother answered. If you will loue another, tell me what he is: the Daughter sayd, I will loue a Priest. To whom the Mother sayd, it were better to you, & lesse sin to loue a knight or a squier then a Priest, & the daughter sayd: If I should loue a knight or a gentle Squier, in short time hee would be wearie of mee, and after that he would doe me shame, & so will not the Priest, for hee will hould and keep his own honor and counsell, as well as mine, also spirituall men bee more true to their loues then the secular men: the Mother sayd, heare my counsell and it will bee good for you. Old folke are wily & fell, tempt your husband first, & if ye escape him without doing any harme or smiting, then loue the Priest. The Daughter sayd I may not so long abide. The Mother

therſayd, vpon my bleſſing abide t
yee haue prooued him, the Daught
ſayde, vppon your bleſſing I w
abyde ſo long till I haue attempt
him. But firſt tell mee howe that
ſhall prooue hym, the Mother ſay
he hath in his Orchard a tree whi
hee loueth much, cauſe it to bee ſm
ten downe whyle hee is out at hu
ting, and againſt his comming m
him therewith a fire, and if he forge
it you, then may you ſurely loue
Prieſt. As ſhee hearde that Co
ſell of her Mother, ſhee went to h
houſe. To whome her huſband ſa
where haue you been ſo long? ſhe a
ſwered, I haue beene in the Chur
where I met with my Mother, a
with her I haue a little talked a
communed, and ſo beganne proper
for to diſſemble, after Mid-day t
Knight road out for to hunt, th
ſhee thinking vppon the counſaile
her Mother, went to the Gardin

nd sayd to him, cut downe this yong
Tree newly planted, that I may
nake a fier thereof to warme my
Lord withall at his comming home
rom hunting, for it is a great wind
nd right sharpe cold: the Gardiner
ide, Madame that will I not doe,
y my Lord loueth better the Tree,
han he doth all the other Trees, ne-
ertheleſſe I ſhall well helpe you to
ather wood ynough for to make a
ood fier, but in any wiſe this I will
ot hewe downe. As ſhee heard that,
hen boldely ſhee tooke the Axe from
e Gardiner, and hewed downe the
ree her ſelfe, and made the Gardi-
er with other to beare it home. At e-
en when the Lord came from hun-
ng, hee was ſore cold: the Ladie
ade a great fier, and went and met
ith him, and ſet him a ſtoole before
e fier to warme him, and as he a lit-
e while had ſitten, he perceiued the
our of the fier, and called to him

the Gardiner and said, I feele by this odour, that the newe Plant burneth in the fier. The Gardiner said, Lord it is true, my Ladie your wife hath felled it downe: the knight sayd to her, God forbid that my Plant should bee cut downe by you, she answered anon and sayd, Lord I haue done it knowing the weather cold, & you also cold, and therefore I haue ordayned this fier for your comfort. As the knight heard that, he looked angerly vpon her, and said, O cursed woman how wast thou so hardy as to hewe downe so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest well that I loued aboue all my other trees. When he had so said, she began to weepe and excuse her selfe and said, my Lord I haue done it for your good, and do you take it so greeuously, and began to crie woe, woe be to me, anon as the knight sawe the weeping & teares of his wife, and heard her cause, he was

moued

moued with mercie, and sayd to her, cease off your weeping, and beware how that ye anger me any more, or trouble mee in any thing that I loue. The next day early in the morning, she went againe to the churchyard, & met with her mother coming against her, and they saluted eth other. Then the Daughter said to the Mother, ah deare Mother I will loue the Priest, for I haue attempted my Lord, as ye counsailed me, but all for nought, for hee anon forgaue it when he saw me a little weepe. Then said the mother, though old men one time forgiue, they double the paine another time, and therefore I counsaile you that you yet once againe attempt him.

Then said the Daughter, I may not any longer abide, for I suffer so much paine for the loue of the Priest, that with my tongue I cannot tell, therefore yee shall pardon mee, I will no more follow or doe after your coun-

cell: then said the Mother, for the loue that the Childe should haue vnto the mother, attempt him yet once, and for your Fathers blessing, and then if yee goe quite without any harme or beating, loue the Priest in the name of God. Then answered the Daughter, it is to mee great paine so long time to abide, neuertheles for the blessing of my Father I shall once attempt him, but tell me how I shall beginne. the Mother sayd, I vnderstand that he hath a little hound that he loueth well & keepeth his bed, cast the hound with so great might before his face against the wall, that it die, and if yee escape without a stripe, or that he forgiue it you lightly, then in the name of God loue the Priest. Then said the Daughter, I shall in all things doe after your counsaile, for there is no Daughter liuing at this day, that would more gladly haue the blessing of the Father and mother, than I.

And

And so she bad her Mother farewell, and went to her house againe, & that day with great importunitie & trouble of heart, shee brought to the night. And when the night was come, shee commaunded the bedde to be couered with purple and with cloth of gould. Whiles the Knight sate by the fier, & when the bed was thus made readie, the litle hound as he was accustomed leapt vppon the bed, and shee tooke him by the hinder legges, and with a wood and malicious heart shee cast it against the wall that it lay still dead: when the good old Knight saw that, he was maruailously angry, and said with a loud voice to his wife, O thou most cruell and most of all wicked women, howe couldest thou find in thine heart to kill that little gentle hound that I so much loued? Lorde sayd she, haue yee not seene howe the hounde with his feete comming out of the myze hath betrayed our bedde?

that is so precioully coueted with rich cloathes: and the Knight saide with much anger, knew you not that I loued much better my little Hound than the bedde, when she heard that, anon shee began pitiously to weepe, and sayd, woe be to mee that euer I was borne, for all things that I do for the best, it is all turned into the worst. The knight would not suffer the weeping and lamenting of his wife, but for that he loued her so much he sayd vnto her, cease your weeping, for I forgiue it you altogether, and I counsaile you that ye beware how that ye displease me from henceforth, and so they went to bed together.

Vppon the morrow shee arose verely and went to the Church where shee met with her Mother, to whom, when shee had done reuerence as it behooued, shee sayd, Mother now will I loue the Priest, for I haue attempted my husband, the second time

and

and all things he hath suffered.
The mother said, O my deere daughter, there is no crueltie or falshood aboue the crueltie of ould folkes, and therefore I counsaile you, that you yet once proue him, vnto whome the Daughter answeted, Mother yee labour in vaine, for if ye wist what and how much paine that I suffer for the Priests loue, yee should rather helpe me, if ye loued me. The Mother said, heare me daughter this one time, and I shall neuer let you more. Thinke how you haue sucked milke out of my breasts, and the great pain that I suffered for you at your birth: by these paines my deere Daughter I desire and charge you, that ye denie me not this good petitiõ, & I promise to God no more to let you nor hinder you of your intent, but rather to helpe you thereto, then answered the daughter, it is to mee a great paine to abstaine me, and to forbeare my selfe so long

from the loue of the Priest, neuertheless for the great charge that ye haue laide to mee, and also for that ye haue made a vow no more for to let mee but to further me, tell me how I shall attempt him, & I shall yet once more giue the aduenture. The mother said I know well that on Sunday next commung he intendeth to haue vs all to dinner, and there shall be your Father and I, and all our friends, with all the best of the City: and when you are set in your place, & all the meate are brought and serued vppon the table, fasten on the keyes priuily that hang at your girdle in the table cloth, and then doe you fayne to haue forgotten your knife, & say these words openly: see what a short wit that I am off, I haue forgotten my knife in my chamber, and then rise vp hastily and goe, and the Cloth with all the meats yee shall cast downe and ouerthrow vppon the ground, and

yee escape without paine, I make a
vowe to God, that I shall neuer let
you after. The Daughter sayd, that
shall I gladly doe, and so tooke her
leaue and departed. The Feast day
came, & all as the Mother sayd were
bidden, the seruants made ready and
couered the table, all were set at the
table, & the daughter sat ouer against
her Lord, and when the table was
well serued with meates and other
things thereto belonging, the Ladie
of the house sayd with a high voice,
see how forgetfull I am, I haue left
my knife in my Chamber, which I
must fetch, & so rose vp hastily, & drew
the cloth with al ỹ meat vpon it with
her, and all the gold vessels and salts
lay vpon the ground: the knight war-
ed sore angry in hart, but he for shame
dissembled afore his guests, and com-
maunded another cleane cloth, and
other meats to be brought, and with
ioye and mirth hee saluted his guests,

so

to eate and make good cheere, that
him they were all made merrie. T
Feast or Dinner done, they gaue
thanks to the knight, and tooke the
leaues and departed euerie man
wards his own house: vpon the ne
day in the morning the knight ar
earely and went to the Church, a
heard seruice, after which, hee we
to a Barbour and sayd vnto him,
are yon expert in bloud letting
what paine that I will desire you
saide, Sir I am expert in what pa
that yee can name in a mans bod
The knight sayd, I am well conte
come with me, & when he was co
to his house, he entred into his cha
ber where his wife lay in bed, & sa
to her, rise vp shortly, then sayd sh
what shall I doe vp so early, it is n
yet ix. of the clocke: the knight sai
you must rise vp, for you must b
letten blood on both your arme
She sayd, I was neuer letten blood

and

nd shall I now bleed? then said the
knight that is troth, and therefore
ee are a foole: remember ye not that
rst ye hewed downe my tree, and a-
nother time ye killed my little hound,
nd yesterday ye shamed me afore all
ur Freends and Parents, and the
ourth is, if I should suffer you thus
o goe forth, ye should for euer con-
ound and shame me: the cause hereof
I consider, that ye haue euill & wild
lood within your body, and therefore
I will that the corrupt blood shall be
awne out, that ye from henceforth
hall no more put me to shame and an-
er, and so caused to be made a great
re, and she stod & cried, & held vp her
andes towardes Heauen, and sayd,
My Lord forgiue me this Trespas,
nd haue pitie vppon me at this time,
nd I shall neuer more offend you.
The knight sayd, pray for no mercy,
or þ mercie that God hath wrought
owards thee at this present, is this.

that

that except thou houldest out th
arme straight, I shall soone haue t
heart blood, & he said also to the B
boy, smite hard & make a deepe h
in her arme, or else I shall giue yo
great stripe: then smote the Barbo
soze that the blood came abounda
ly out, & the Knight would not su
him to stanch it, vntill the time t
she changed colour in her visage,
as this was done, hee bad it to
stopped, & willed the Barboz to s
the vaine vppon the other arme, t
cryed she with a verie loud voice,
sweet husband, I pray you haue co
passion vppon me, foz now I die:
Knight answered, wife ye shold h
thought vpon this befoze, ere you
done to mee these three euill tozme
oz dispights: then she held out her
arme, and the Barbour sm
therein an hole, that the blood ca
out right vgly, and he suffered her
bleed vnto the time that the colour
her

er bilage changed, & that she swoun-
ed: then sayd the Knight, now bind
e arme and stanch it, and said to her
ow goe to bed and study, and thinke
ncefoꝛth how you may amend your
ife, oꝛ else I shall drawe the bloud of
ur heart: and as this was done, he
ue the Barbour his reward, and
en hee went againe vnto his owne
ife, and his Wife vnder the hands
her maidens nigh dead, was led to
bed, shee bad one of her Maidens
e to her Mother in all hast, and say
at I desire her to come speake with
ee before I die: the Mother when
e heard that, was glad of the coꝛ-
tion of her Daughter, and came
ftly to her. When the Daughter
ard her mother, she said, O my most
eare Mother, I am almost dead,
I haue bled so much blood, that I
eene I shall not escape the death.
hen answerered the Mother, said
not vnto you, that old men are

right

right cruell and fell, will ye now lo
the Priest? She said, the Diuell m
the priest confound and shame, I w
neuer loue other but my husband, t
said the Maister to the Emperou
Lord haue ye vnderstood me? and
answeared, right well, for among
all other that euer I haue heard, t
was the best example. Three e
deedes she did to her husband, and
doubt not but if shee hadde done
fourth, shee should haue shamed
for euer. Then said the Maister, th
fore I counsaile you that yee be w
of your wife, least it happen worse
you, for why, if you put to death y
onely Son for her wordes, you sh
be deceiued in the end, and for euer
shall repent it. The Emperour sa
truely master this day my Son sh
not die. The Maister said, my Lo
I thanke you, that ye for mine exa
ple and my sake this day haue spa
your Sonne.

The Fist complaint of the Empresse.

The Empresse hearing that the Child was not yet dead, foorthwith apparelled her selfe, and caused her waynes and Carts to bee in a readinesse, as though she should haue gone home into her Countrey to her Father, for to haue complained of the great shame that was done vnto her, and yet could haue no remedie thereof. The Seruants seeing that, went and shewed to the Emperour, that the Empresse was going into her Countrey, when he perceiued that, he went to her saying, whether are you going?

I hoped that you had loued mee so much, that in all the world ye would haue sought no solace but with mee. To that she said, that is true, & therefore I goe from you, for I had leaver heare of your death, than to see you die, without doubt yee delight to much

much to heare these Maisters, that it shall happen vnto you as it did vnto Octauian the Emperour, the which was so couetous, that the noble men of the Empire buried him quicke, and filled his mouth with molten gould. The Emperour sayd, deere Wife doe not so, that another time the blame to you or mee might be layd. Then said the Empresse, truely the blame is yours, for haue you not promised me many times that your son should die and yet he liueth: and therefore from henceforth I will no more beleue you. Then sayd the Emperour, it becometh not a King euerie cause lightly to discusse without aduise, & especially vppon his Sonne, vppon whom it is not meete lightly to giue iudgement, and therefore I say and pray you that ye will tell me somewhat by the which I may gouerne my selfe: for it is the vtter destruction of a King, without aduise, and vndiscreetly to

giue

giue Iudgement, she answeared and sayd, I will gladly tell you a notable example, so that from henceforth ye shall not be couetous or desirous to heare the Maysters, and began to say in this fourme.

The fift Example of the Empresse.

OCtauianus the Emperour raigned in Roome right rich and couetous, and aboue all things he loued gould. The Citizens of Rome that time did much harme, and many great outrages to other Nations, insomuch that diuers Nations and Regions were mooued and stirred against the Romaynes. In that time there was Maister Virgilius the which excelled in Magicke & in other Sciences al other Maisters: the Citizens prayed him that hee by his Art and cunning would deuise somewhat by the which they of their enemies might haue warning and knowledge before.

whereby that they might prouide for themselues the better. He made by his Art and Cunning a Tower, and about vppon the Tower did cause to be set as many Images as in all the world were Regions and prouinces, and in the middest of ỳ Tower he let to be made and set, an Image which held in his hand an Apple or a great round ball of Gold. And euerie Image of the Tower held in his hand a little bell, and stood turning and looking towards his owne Prouince to him assigned, and as often times as any Prouince would stirre and rebell against the Romaynes, so often turned him the Image of the Land, and rang the Bell. That hearing, the Citizens of Roome armed themselues, and to that Prouince hasted with all their might, the same to subdue: and so was there no Land so great that could wreake them vppon the Romaynes, and therefore were they

dread

dread and feared ouer all the World. Also that Mayster Virgill made for the solace and comfort of the poore people a Light that alway burned, & by that light he made two Bathes, the one of them hotte, in the which the poore people might Bath & wash themselues: and the other cold, in the which they might themselues refresh. Betwixt that Light and the Bathes, he made an Image standing, in whose forehead was written, hee that smiteth mee, shall anon haue vengeance. The Image stoode there many yeeres, at the last there came a Clarke & beheld the Image, & read this writing, & thought in himselfe, what vengeance hee might finde therefore: I beleeue better that if any man should smite thee, & that thou fallest therewith to the earth, hee should find some Treasure vnder thy feete, and therefore is thy writing that no man should haue it. And

the Clarke lift vp his hande and gaue the Image a great stroake that it fell on the ground, and anon the light was out, and the Bathes were vanished away, & hee found no Treasure. The poore folk perceiuing that, were all sorrowfull, saying, cursed might he be for euermore, that for his singuler couetousnesse hath destroyed this Image, and hath robbed vs of so great solace and comfort: hereafter assembled three Kinges, the which of the Romaynes had been oppressed, and suffered great wronges, and went to Counsell with them of their Counsel, how they might best of the Romaines be auenged, and some of them sayd, we labour in vaine, as long as there standeth the tower with the Images we may doe nothing against them.

To the Counsaile arose vp Foure Knights, and sayd to the Kinges, we haue thought on a good remedie, how ye shall destroy the Tower with the

Images,

Images, and that to doe and bring a-bout wee will our liues sette to pledge if that you will do the cost. Then sayd the King, what cost shall wee doe: they sayd, we must haue foure Tunnes of Gould. Then sayd the King, take the Gold and fulfill your promise: the Knights tooke the Gould, and went towardes Rome, and when they were thether come, in the night with-out one of the Gates, in the Ditch with water they drowned one of the Tunnes with the Gold, and another tun they drowned by the second gate, and the third Tun they drowned by the third gate, & the fourth tun by the fourth gate they drowned: and when they had this done, early in the Morning they entred into the Citie at an houre conuenient when the Emperor went ouer to the Mart, they did him reuerence as it behoued. The Empe-rour seeing them, demanded from whence they were, of what science, &

what Seruice they could doe: they answeared, wee are of farre Countries, and Soothsayers so perfect, that there was neuer thing so priuily or secretly hid, but that wee shall finde it by our Dreames. Wee haue heard that yee labour and haue pleasure in such thinges, and therefore came wee vnto you to know if ye had any need of our seruice. The Emperour sayd, I shall proone you, and if it be so that I finde you true, you shall haue of me great rewards & thanks. They sayd, we aske nothing for our labours, but the halfe deale of the Gould that by vs shall be found, the Emperour said, I am verie well content, and thus they had with the Emperour many words. At euen when ỳ Emperour was going to bed, they said vnto him, My lord if it please you this night shall the oldest of vs set his cunning a worke, and dreame, the thirde day wee shall shew you h[illegible] dreame,

dreame, and what it signifieth: the Emperor said, go in gods name. And they went forth with great gladnesse, and all ỳ night they passed ouer with derisions and mirth, vpon trust that they should come to a good purpose. When the third day was come, they went early to the Emperour, the first of them sayd, my Lord, pleaseth it you to goe with vs without one of the gates of the Citie, and I shall shew you where a Tun full Gould is hid, the Emperour sayd, I shall goe with you and see if it bee true that you say. When they were come to the place, they drue out the Tunne that they before there hadde put, the Emperour when hee sawe that, was glad, and gaue to them their part. Then sayd the second Dreamer, My Lord, this night shall I dreame, the Emperour sayd, God giue you a good Dreame. The next night came, and hee tooke out the other Tun, and gaue it to the

Emperour, and tooke also his share in like wise did the third & the fourth, vppon the which the Emperour was out of all measure ioyous & glad, and sayd, he had not seene afore such true & expert Soothsayers or Dreamers as they were, then sayd they altogether at once, as it had been out of one mouth. My Lord, we haue one after another dreamed, the which as yet haue seen they be all true prooued, but nowe if it please you that wee may Dreame all together this night, we trust that to vs shalbe shewed where wee shall finde a great quantitie and substance of Gold and of riches: the Emperour sayd, God giue to you a good dreame, which to me and to you may be profitable. On the next morrow they came againe vnto the Emperour, and sayd to him with ioyous and glad Visages & countenances. My Lord, we bring good and profitable tydings, for this night in our

sleepes

sleepes, such and so great Treasure is to vs shewed, the which if you will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so much inriched, that in this World shall bee none like you: the Emperour sayd, where should wee finde this Treasure? they sayd vnder the foundation of the Tower that ỳ Images stand vpon. The Emperour answered, God defend that I should for loue of gold destroy ỳ Tower with Images, wherewith wee of our enemies bee defended and warned: they said to him againe, My Lord, haue yee found vs in our sayinges otherwise than true and rightfull. The Emperour sayd, nay: O Lord sayd they, we with our owne handes shall giue out the Gould, without hurting of the Tower or ỳ Images. And it is expedient, that secretly in the night, by vs it bee done, for dread of resort, & concourse of the people, least that ye should run in the noise and clamours

of

of them, and also that they should n
take that good Gold away from y
and vs. The Emperour sayd, goe
the name of God and doe your be
as you well can, and I shall to mo
row early come to you. Then wen
they with ioy and gladnes, and in t
night they were let into the Tow
and with great hast & diligence th
vndermined it, and in the next d
early they mounted vpon their Ho
ses, and roade againe towardes the
owne Country with ioy and glory,
ere that they came without the sig
of Rome, the Tower fell downe on t
morning ensuing. When it was fall
and the Senators it perceiued, th
sorrowed greatly, and there wa
great bewayling throughout all t
Citie, and they went to the Empero
and sayd, lord how may it be that th
Tower is thus fallen, by the whic
we haue alwayes had warning afo
of our enemies: he answeared & sayd,

to

to me came foure false deceiuers, and fayned themselues to be Soothsayers, and that they could finde Treasure in the ground. And they sayd, that vnder the foundation of the tower was hidden an innumerable Summe of Gould, the which they should vndermine without hurting of the Tower or the Images, and I gaue faith to them, and they haue deceiued mee. They answered him, ye haue coueted so much Gould, and for your saciate couetousnes, wee shall be all destroyed, but first your couetousnesse shall fall vppon your selfe: they took and led him to the Capitol, and layd him on his back and poured his mouth full of molten Gould, saying to him, you haue desired gold, and therefore ye shall drinke Gold, & after they buryed him quicke. Not long after that, came the enemies against the Romaynes, and ouercame & destroyed them all. Then said the Empresse

pzelle vnto the Emperoz, haue ye
Lozd this Example well vnderstoo
and he sayd, right well: then said
the Tower with the Images is y
bodie and Fiue witts. As long
you doe liue, there is none so har
to trouble oz make warre vpon y
ne vppon your people, that hath y
Sonne right well vnderstood w
his seauen Maisters, and with t
false narrations of Fables, seek h
they may destroy you: foz you ar
uer much couetous to heare and
cline to them, and insomuch than t
shall vndermine you, and cast y
vnder foote and bring you to nou
The Images are your fiue Witt
that be all lost. And foz as much
you bee so Childish and foolish, t
shall destroy and slay you, and y
Son shall obtain your Empire. T
Emperour sayd, ye haue recited to
a good example, wherefoze it shal
to me happen, as it did with the to

et,

, but my Sonne first this day shall
e hanged, to whome the Empresse
yd, if ye doe so, ye shall fare well, and
ue long. Vppon the third day, hee
mmaunded him to bee led to hang-
g, and as he was led towards the
allowes, came riding against him
ppon an Horse, his fift Mayster to-
ards the Pallaice, and came before
e Emperour, and saluted him with
reuerence, and hee despised his sa-
tation, and put him in feare of his
fe. And the Maister sayd, My lord
haue not deserued to die, and for to
dise my Salutation, it is not your
nour, for your Son hath not with
been of such conditions as yee re-
te him, as yee in short time shall
de, & that he speaketh not is of his
eat wisdome, & know ye that he shal
ll speake as time commeth, though
t hee now speaketh not, as you in
ort time shall heare, but ye say that
e would haue shamed your wife,

that

that beleeue not, for so a wise man hee is, should neuer attempt so shamefull a deede, and if ye put him to death for your wiues wordes, yee shall not escape without shame and vengeance like as Ippocras scaped not without vengeance for the death of Galenus his Cozen: the Emperour said that would I faine heare and vnderstand. Then sayd the Master, why should auaile to tell you this narration for your profite, if in the meane season your Sonne shall die, & therefore if ye will call again your Son, it shall be done at your pleasure, and after do as you thinke best. The Emperour bad call againe his Sonne, & set him in prison: and then began the Master to tell on this manner as followeth.

The Example of the fift Maister.

SOmetime there was a Famous Phisition named Ippocras, right cunning, the which excelled all other

ther in cunning and Science, hee ad with him his Nephewe or kinsman that was called Galienus, the which hee loued much: this Galienus was of an excellent wit, and applyed all his mind and wit to learne of his uncle the Science of Phisicke. When Ippocras perceiued that, in as much as he could, he hid from him his cunning, fearing that hee should excell him in that Craft for the great witte that he was of. As Galienus saw this, hee studyed and exercised, in so much that in short time hee had perfect Cunning in Phisicke, for the which Ippocras enuyed him much. It happened vppon a time thereafter, that the King of Hungarie sent Messengers vnto Ippocras, that he should come vnto him for to cure his Sonne: Ippocras excused himselfe, and would not goe, but sent his Cosen Galienus with his Letters of excuse for his not comming. And when

Galienus

Galienus was come before the King, hee was right worshipfully receiued, but they marueiled why that Ippocras would not come, hee excused him, saying that hee had many great thinges to doe, and hee might not come, but hee hath sent mee in his stead, and with the helpe of God I shall make whole the Childe, that pleased verie well the King. Galienus went to the Childe, and when he had seene his Vrine, and tasted his pouces, hee sayd to the Queene, O excellent Princesse, I pray you heare and suffer my wordes, and tell mee who is the Father of the Child, shee sayd, who should be his Father but my lord the King? Galienus sayd, I am sure that hee is not the Father, shee answered, if ye will say that for a troth, I shall cause your head to bee smitten off, hee answeared, I say once againe, that this King is not the

the

ther, and I am not therefore come hether to loose my head, for I haue not deserued any such reward, and he was going his way. The Queene spake, O good Maister Galienus, if yee will keepe it secret and not discouer mee, I shall shewe and open vnto you my heart. The Master said, God defend that from mee, that I to any person should shewe it, and therefore O noble Queene shew it boldly to me, for it shall neuer passe my mouth, and afterwards I shall ease & make your sonne whole: she sayd, if yee doe that, ye shall haue a good reward of me, & therefore heare what I shall say. Of fortune came hether vnto my Lord, the King of Burgundie, and he was so long conuersant with me, that this child by him I bare: then said the master, feare ye not, I knew that it was so before, and anon he gaue the Child to eat beefe, of an Oxe, and drinke, and the Child was eased of his infir-

I mitie.

mitie. And when as the King heard that the child was quite of his maladie, he gaue vnto the Maister a good reward, but of the Queene hee secretly receiued a great guift and a speciall thanke, and went his way. And when that hee was come home, Ippocras his Maister demaunded of him saying, haue ye beheld the Child? and he sayd yea, then asked he him what he gaue him, flesh or beefe to eat, and water to drinke. Then said Ippocras, the woman of the child is not true to her husband, that is troth said Galienus: then Ippocras was mooued with enuie, and thought in himselfe, if hee be not found a remedie, my Science shall no more be set by, and he shall be named and praised aboue mee. And from that day forward, he bethought him and deuised how hee might slay him. Vpon a day Ippocras called him and sayd, come go we to seeke and gather hearbs in the Garden, to whom

hee

hee sayd, Maister I am readie: and when they were come into the Garden, Ippocras sayd, I feele that this hearbe is right vertuous, stoop down & gather me of it, Galienus did so. As they went about the garden, sayd Ippocras, now I well perceiue the odour of this hearbe, that it is better and preciouser than Gould, and therefore stoope downe to the ground, & drawe him out with the roots, for it is much worth: Galienus bowed downe himselfe to pull vp the hearbe, and Ipocras drewe out his knife and killed him. After that, Ippocras fell sicke to death, that the strength of his bodie fayled him, and did as much as hee could to helpe himselfe, but it would not bee, and as the Schollers and Disciples heard of it, they went hastily to him, and all that they might or could doe, for the profite of his health, they did, but it auayled him nothing.

When Ippocras this perceiued,

he sayd vnto his schollers, go fetch me a great Tunne, and fill it full vnto the brinkes with water, and when they had so done, he sayd vnto them, make now therein an hundred holes, and when that was also done, there went none of the water out. Then said Ippocras, behould my most deere Disciples how that the vengeance of God is fallen vppon mee, as yee openly may see, for in this Tunne are an hundred holes, & yet goeth thereout not one drop: right so there commeth no vertue out of the hearbes to helpe me, and therefore what you doe vnto mee helpeth not, for I must die, but my deere children, if my Nephew Galienus were now aliue, hee could heale mee, whome I haue slaine, and that me sore greeueth, and therefore the vengeance of God commeth vppon mee. And this said, hee turned him to the wall, & gaue vp the Ghost. Then said the maister vnto the Emperour,

perour, my Lord vnderstand yee well what I haue sayd, hee answered, yea right well, what hurt had it beene to him, if Galienus had liued?

The Master answered, it had been right good for Ippocras at that time, had not he dyed, & therefore by right wise iudgement of god, his medicines auailed him not, & therefore I shewed to you, that it shall happen worse to you, if that you put to death your son for the words of your wife, which in time of necessity shall assist and succour you: and consider ye not, that ye haue after your first wife wedded this wife that ye now haue, and so ye may the third and fourth, and neuer shall ye haue of any of them such a Sonne that shall keepe and saue you from perill? the Emperour sayd, truely he shall not die.

Then said the Maister, then doe yee wisely, and I commend you to God and I thanke you, that yee haue this

day for me spared your son. The emperour sayd, I marke this well, that women are craftie and subtill, therefore I will not for you, but for my selfe saue him.

The Sixt complaint of the Empresse.

When as the Empresse had knowledge thereof, shee shewed her selfe such a wood & impatient bodie, that all that sawe her or heard her, wondred & said to the Emperour, your wife she pineth her selfe, as though she would die. The Emperour thereof hearing, went to her and sayd, wherefore be yee so impatient? she answered, saying, O Lord, how should I hould it in when I am the onely Daughter of a King, & your wife? & in your companie I haue had a great despight and shame, & continually yee haue promised me hym to punish, but ye performe it not. The Emperor said, I wot not what I shall doe? ye labour from day

to

to day to haue my Sonne slaine: and the Maisters labour to saue his life: and amongest all these I know well that he is my sonne, but whether the troth is that I know not. Then sayd she, this is the cause whereof I complaine, that ye beleeue the Maysters, more than you do me, therefore it shall happen to you as it did to a king with his Steward. Then sayd the Emperor, tell that example, peraduenture it may moue mee the sooner to put my sonne to death: she said gladly, but I pray you giue attendance to what I shall say, and began to tell as hereafter ensueth.

The sixt Example of the Empresse.

THere was a king right proud & marualously deformed in his visage, in such wise, that women hated and abhorred him.

This king thought to destroy Rome and to slay the Romaines, & to take

and carrie away the bodies of Peter and Paule, who while hee was in this minde, called to him his Steward that was right secret with him of his priuie counsell, and said to him, goe and seeke me a faire woman, that this night may sleepe with me. The Steward answeared, My Lord, yee knowe well your infirmitie and disease, and that no woman will doe euill without a great summe of money. The king sayd, thinke ye that for money I will want one? Haue I not Gold and siluer ynough? though it were a M. florens, I would it gladly giue. The Steward hearing that was anon smitten with couetousnes, & went to his owne wife which was right faire and chast, & of good kinred, and sayd to her, O my good wife, my Lord desireth and coueteth for to sleep with a faire and beautifull woman, and will not forbeare it, though that she should aske of him a M. florens,

and

and hath commaunded me to prouide him of one, and therefore I counsaile you, that ye to vs get this money: the wife said, were it not so that the King were so proud and foule of visage, yet would I not to that euill consent, for the sinne against God: the Steward answered, I consent that ye shall doe it, and thereto I councell and commaund you, & promise you, that without yee consent to me herein, ye shall neuer haue good day with mee: shee hearing that trembled, insomuch that for dread shee consented to him.

The Steward then went to the king and sayd, Sir, I haue found out a faire woman, and shee is come of a verie good house, which will not lesse haue than a M. Florens, and in the euening shee shall come, and early in the Morning she must away, that she be not seen of the people, the king answered and sayd, I am well content. When the night was come, the Steward

ward led his wife to the kings bed & made fast the doze & went his way early in the Morning the Steward arose and went to the king and said My Lord it will bee day within a while, it is good that you performe your promise, and let the woman go the king sayd, this woman pleaseth me so well, that so soone she shall not depart from me. When he heard that hee departed thence all sorrie, but neuer he tarried any while, but came to the king againe & said, my lord the morning is come, therefore let the woman go as I haue promised her, least that she be ashamed: the king said, yet shall she not go from me, & therefore go out & shut the doze again. The Steward right sorrowfull departed, and went vp and downe with an heauie and an angry heart, till that the faire and the cleare day appeared, and then hee entred again into the chamber & said, my lord it is cleare day, suffer the woman

to depart, that shee be not therewith ashamed. The King answered, I say to you for a troth, shee shall not yet depart, for her companie is vnto mee right pleasant and acceptable. The Steward hearing that, could no longer forbeare ne hould his owne counsell, but sayd to the King, O my good and gracious Lord, I beseech you suffer her to depart, for it is mine owne wife: the King hearing that, sayd to him, open the window. And when it was open, the faire and bright day appeared, he beheld the woman right faire & goodly, and perceiued that it was the wife of the Steward, & said to him, O thou most worst Ribaud or knaue, why hast thou for so little money shamed and vndone thy good and faire wife, and her hast deliuered vnto me vnwitting: therefore hast thee and get thee gone out of my Realme, and neuer more hereafter come in my sight, for from henceforth, if euer I

may

may see thee, thou shalt die the most shamefull and horribleſt death that euer can be imagined. Whē the Steward heard that, he fled his way, and durſt not abide, & was neuer so hardy any more to come into the Realme. And the King kept that Wife all his life time in great worship, and gaue to her plentie of all thinges that to her behooued and pertayned.

After that the King caused to be gathered and assembled a great & mightie Armie of puiſſant men of warre, and so he went to Roome with great might, and beſieged the Citie on all sides, so long vntill the Romaynes would haue deliuered him for to haue departed and withdrawne himself from thence, the bodies of the holy Apoſtles Peter and Paule.

Then was there in the Citie seuen wise Maſters as ye haue now, by the councell of whome all the Citie was guided and gouerned. And the Citi-

zens

gens came to them and said, what shall we doe it behooueth vs that we deliuer vnto your deadly enemies, the bodies of the holy Apostles, or else the Citie. Then answeared the first Maister, I shall with my wisedome and cunning this day saue the Citie, and the bodies of the Apostles, and so one after another promised to doe the same: and so euerie of them for one day, in like wise as the Maisters haue promised your Son. With that the King began to assault the Citie on all parts: then began the first maister to say and alleadge so wisely for to haue peace, that the King that day left his assault, and withdrew himself a little from the Citie, and so did all the Maisters one after another, and the last. Unto whome came the burgesses & said, O Maister ye shall vnderstand that the King hath made his oath sworn, that to morrow with all his puissance and strength he will

haue

haue & win the Citie, or else we m
all bee in ieopardie to loose our liue
therfore in acquiting of your promi
defend and keepe vs from dang
like as all our fellowes before y
haue done. Then answered the M
ster and sayd, be of good comfort a
feare not, for to Morrow I shall
my cunning shew such a worke a
operation, that the king with all
puissance and might shall flee awa
leaue the Siege. The next day
king made & gaue great assault v
the Citie: then went the Maister a
cloathed himselfe with maruayl
strange vesture, hauing therein
feathers or the tayles of Peacock
and of other Fowles of diuers
lours, and tooke two bright Swo
in ech hand one, and went there
and stood vpon the highest Towe
all the Citie, and began to moue
turne or shewe himselfe about on
parts towards the host, so that
mig

might all behould and see him: and he held in his mouth the two bright Swords that maruaylously shyned, they without of the kings Host that behoulding, sayd to him, O Lord behold vpon the hyest of yonder towers a wonderfull thing or a figure, yea I see it well that it is maruaylous, but what it is I knowe not, they sayd, it is Jesus the God of Christian folke, that is come out of heauen vs to slay and destroy with his two swords, if we any longer abide. The king hearing that, trembled for feare, and said what shall wee doe? there is but one way, and that is, that we anon goe and depart from hence, least that their God auenge himselfe vpon vs: then began the king with all his Hoast to flye: notwithstanding there was no need, but that they of the master were beguled & deceiued. And when ỹ Romaines saw that, they hastily pursued after, all armed in good ordinance, &

the

the King with many of his people they killed and destroyed, and also in that manner by great subtiltie of the Maister was the mightie King with his Armie subdued. Then sayd the Empresse to the Emperour, Lord ye haue vnderstoode what I haue sayd, he sayd yea, very well in the best wise. She sayd, now yee haue heard what I haue sayd to you at the beginning of this narration of the steward that the King trusted so much, which for couetousues of good, shamed his own wife, and he for that was driuen and banished out of the Land: In like manner your Son for the desire & appetite that he hath to the Empire, intendeth to confound and destroy you. But whiles you be in your might and power, doe with him as the King did with the Steward: if yee will not put him to death, banish him out of your Empire, that yee without fear may liue in suretie of your life. And

haue

haue ye not also heard, how the King lay before the Citie of Roome, & how he was by the wise Maisters deceiued & scorned, that he with his folke were killed and slaine? In the same wise the seuen Maisters entend to do with you, and by their false wiles and subtilties to deceiue you, and in the end to slay you, that your son may raigne. Whereupon answered the Emperor, and sayd, that shall not so be, for my son to morow shall die. Then he commanded his seruants that they should lead his son to hanging. When all the folke heard that, there was a great noyse and gathering of them, and bewayled the death of the onely Son of the Emperour: and as the first maister heard that, he hasted him to the Emperour, and saluted him honourably, but hee tooke it vnthankefully, and threatned him that hee should die with his Sonne, for that hee was with them made dumme, and a Ry-

baud, which was shewed towards his wife. The Maister sayd, I have not deserued to die with your Sonne but to haue great and large gifts, for he is not dum, as ye shall heare within three dayes if hee may liue so long. But if you put him to death for the wordes of your wife, then shall I neuer haue at your wisedome, and without doubt it shall hapen to you, as some time it happened to a Knight that so much allowed ỹ sayings of his wife that he was bound to an Horse tail and drawne throughout all the Citie to the gallowes. The Emperor said for ỹ loue of God shew me that example, that I may the better beware of that perill: that I will not doe as the Maister, without you doe call a gaine your son: then he commaunded to call his Sonne, and the Maister began as followeth.

The Example of the sixt Maister.

Some

SOmetime there was an Emperour of Rome which had three knights whome hee loued aboue all other. And in the same Citie was an ancient Knight, that had wedded a faire young Wife, as you doe the Empyes, which aboue all other thinges hee loued: this Lady could sing right well and melodiously, & with such sweetnesse, that many drewe to her house, and desired her company. It befell vpon a season, as she sat at her House, her Visage turned into the Streete, that shee might see him that went by and began sweetely to sing, that all folke delighted to heare her. By chaunce came that wayes a Knight of the Emperours Court, and heard that voice, and beholding her attentiuely hee was taken in her loue and entred into her house, and fell in communication with her of loue, and amongst all other talke he demaunded what hee should giue her to sleepe by

her one night, she answered, an Hundred Florens. The knight sayd, tell me when I shall come, & I will giue you an hundred Florens. She sayd, when I haue conuenient time I shall send for you: the next day shee sate againe in the same place, and it happened the second Knight of the Emperour to come by that same way, the which likewise was smitten in her loue, and he also promised her a Hundred Florens. To whome also she promised to shewe him a time prouided. The third day, was the third Knight in like wise caught in her loue, the which also promised her an Hundred Florens, and shee to giue him knowledge of the time. The three Knightes haue so secretly spoken with the Ladie, that none of them had knowledge of other. The Ladie that was malicious and deceitfull, came to her Husband, and sayd, Sir I haue a secret matter to

shew

shelde you, wherein if you follow my counsaile, our necessitie and pouerty ye may largely relieue. The knight sayd, tell it me, I shall hould it secret, and fulfill it to my power: shee sayd, Three knightes of the Emperours Court haue been with me one after another, in such wise that none knoweth of anothers councell, & euery one hath offered me a C. Florens, might we three C. Florens get, & no knowledge thereof detected, should it not be to vs a great helpe, and our pouertie be well relieued? The knight said in sooth yes, & therefore whatsoeuer you counsaile me to doe, I shall follow it. Then sayd shee, I shall giue you this counsaile, when they come with the florens, ye shall stand behind the gate with your Sword drawne in your hand, and because that euerie of them cometh alone, ye shall slay one after another, & so wee shall haue the C. Florens of them without know-

ledge of any other. The knight answere, O my best beloued wife, I feare me that this euill cannot be hid, and wee should therefore shamefully suffer death if that it were knowne. Shee sayd, I shall this worke begin, and I shall make thereof a good end, and feare it not: when the knight saw that shee was so hardie, it caused him to be the more bold, and she sent for the first Knight, and he came to her anon without any tarrying, to the gate and knocked, and she asked if he brought the L. Florens, and he said yea, I haue them heere alreadie, then let shee him in, and anon in the entring in her Husband killed him, and so her did the seconde, and the thirde, and into one secret Chamber they drew the bodies of them: when it was thus done, the knight sayd vnto his Ladie: O deare wife, if these bodies bee found with vs, wee shall die the most shamefull death that can bee imagined,

imagined, for it is not possible but that these Knights shall bee missed in the Emperours Court, and great search and inquisition shall be for them made throughout all this City, where they are become. Shee sayd, for I haue this worke begun, I shall make thereof a good end, feare not as aforesayd. This Ladie had a Brother, the which had the gouernance of the wealth of the Citie, that on the nights watched in the streets with his fellowes, she stood at her gate and called her brother and sayd. O my best Brother, I haue a secret matter, the which in confession I shall shewe you, and therefore come a little within: and when that he was come in, the Ladie receiued him frendly, and gaue him Wine to drinke and saide, my welbeloued brother, this is the cause that I haue called you, for I haue much neede of your counsaile. The Brother answeared, say it boldly

ly vnto mee, and whatsoeuer that I may doe, to my power, that shall be at your desire without letting: then sayd shee, yesterday came in a Knight in good friendship, but afterwardes hee fell into such words and bastance with my Husband, that he slew him, and he lyeth in my Chamber: & mine owne deere Brother, we haue no man that we may trust but you, and if the bodie be found by vs, wee should die, she made mention but of one, the brother sayd, deliuer him mee in a sacke, I shall beare him to the sea: shee hearing that, was full glad thereof, and deliuered vnto him the body of the first Knight, he took it and went withal a good pace & cast him therein. And as this was done, he came againe to his sister and sayd, giue me now of the best wine, for you are of him quit, and she thanked him and went into her chamber, as though he had gone for wine, and began to crie with an hye voice,

the

the knight that was cast into the sea, is come againe: as her brother heard that, he wondred sore & said, giue me him I shall see if he will rise againe, & tooke the bodie of the second knight, supposing it had beene of the first knight, & went to the sae, & with a great stone hee drowned him therein, that done, he went againe vnto his sisters house and said, now fill me a cup with good wine, for I haue drowned him so deepe, that hee shall neuer come againe, she sayd thanks be to God, and went again to her Chamber, & taried her to fetch wine, & cryed with a loud voice, alas woe be to me, he is risen againe, and come out of the Sea: & as her brother heard that, with a great marualle sayd, what deuell is this knight that I haue cast into the water, & notwithstanding is come again? deliuer me him the third time, and I shall see if hee shall come againe: then gaue she him the third knight, which

hee

yet beleeued had been the first knight
and went without the Citie to a gre
Forrest, & made a great fier & cast th
knight therein, and when he was al
most burnt, the Brother went then
a little distance to doe his neede, the
came there a knight that would rid
to the Cite, where in the Morning
they should haue a tourney & Iusting
and it was cold weather & darke a
was not far from the City, and wh
he had a sight of fier, he drew there
and lighted from his Horse and wa
med him. The watchman came a
sayd to him, what art thou? & knig
sayd, I am a gentle knight: the
spake the watchman & sayd, thou a
no knight but a Diuell, for first I c
thee into the water, the second ti
with a great stone I drowned thee
the third time I haue put thee in th
fier, supposing thou hadst been bur
and yet thou standest here, & then
tooke the knight with his Horse, a

ca

cast them both in the fier. After that he went againe to his sister and told what had happened him, & sayd, now bring me of the best wine, for after that I had burnt him, I found him againe by the fier with a horse, and I haue cast them both in the fier, and by this his sister perceiued well that hee had burnt a knight of ỹ tourney: who anon brought him of the best wine abundantly, & after he had well drunken, he went thence. Not long time after there fel a great debate & contention betwixt the knight and his wife such wise that hee smote her, which had indignation thereof, and waxed angrie & sayd that many might heare. O wretch wilt thou kill mee, as thou hast done the three knightes of the Emperors certain men that hearing, laid hands on thē, & brought thē before the Emperor, and the woman confessed that her husband had slaine three knights of the emperors, & how

he

he tooke from them three C. Florens. And as it was thus in troth found, both were drawne at an Horse taile, & hanged vpon a Gallowes. Then said the Maister to the Emperour, haue you vnderstoode what I haue said? He answered, right well, I say for certaine, that Wife was the worst woman that might be of all women, for she moued and stirred vp to murder, and afterward discouered him. The Maister sayd, shee is. Without doubt it shall happen to you worse, if you put to death your Sonne by the aduise of your Wife. The Emperour sayd, My Son shall not die this day. The Maister hearing that, gaue thankes to the Emperour and tooke leaue, and went his way.

The Seauenth Complaint of the Empresse.

WHEN the Empresse heard that the Sonne of the Emperour was yet liuing: as a mad woman she ran

to

to the Emperour weeping and cry-
ing, saying, O vnhappy woman, alas
what shall I doe? I must needs slay
my selt that am so shamed, and no pu-
nishment thereupon done: the Empe-
rour answered, God defend, you such
thinges to haue in minde, but suffer a
while, and yee shall haue good end
in your cause. She answered, sir the
end shall be euill, for of that shall fol-
low to you and to me great confusi-
on. The Emperour said, leaue of such
talke, shee sayd, Lord it shall come to
you and your Sonne as it happened
to a King and to his Steward. The
Emperour sayd, I pray you tell mee
that example, she sayd, I will glad-
ly tell it, but I feare me that yee will
heare me no more: For the next day
the seauenth Master shall speake and
saue your Son from the death as his
fellowes haue done. The second day
after this, then your Son shall speak,
of whose wordes you shall haue and

take

take such ioy and delectation, that t
loue betwixt vs shall bee wholly f
gotten and washed away. The e
perour sayd that is impossible to m
for I shall neuer your loue forget.
Then sayd shee, O my best belou
Lord please it you I shall tell you o
example, by the which ye shall be wa
before of many perils in time co
ming, and especially of your accurs
Sonne, who intendeth to dest
me by Maisters: the Emperour say
tell on your example, and the empr
began to tell of this ensuing.

The Seauenth Example of the Empresse.

There was sometime a King, th
which loued his wife aboue all
things, insomuch that he clos
her in a strong Castle, and hee ba
the keyes of the Castle himselfe, t
Ladie was therfore right beauie, an
desolate. Now in farre partes the
was a valiant Knight, the whi

in the night dreamed after this effect for he thought that hee saw one of the faireſt Queens that might be, whose loue aboue all thinges hee desired to obtaine, and that if he might see her walking, he should cleerely haue knowledge of her, by whom toward him a great friendshippe and worship should come. To the Queene that same night by vision of ỹ said knight it was also shewed, and yet they had of each other neither knowledge of name, nether of fame. When the knight had thus dreamed and seen in his sleepe, he thought and determined in his minde that his foote should not rest, vntill the time he had found that Ladie that to him was shewed in his vision, & leapt vpon his Horse, & took with him all that was necessarie for his iourney, and rode & went through diuers Regions and Landes, so long, till at the last hee came vnto the same land where that the Queen was by

her

her husband closed or kept in a strong castle. And when this sayd Knight was come into the same Citie, and by a certain season had therein soiourned: it happened vppon a day as the Knight walked by the Castle, and knew not then that the Queene was therein, shee sate in a windoth to behold and see the people going by, and amonge all other shee sawe the same Knight, and knew that he was the same man that shee had dreamed of, and the Knight by chaunce lift vp his eyes, and perceiued the Ladie sitting in the window, anon his mind shewed him, that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and shee beganne to sing a song of loue. And as hee heard that, hee was anon taken with her loue: the knight frō thencefoorth daily went and walked about the Castle beholding it all ouer, if any manner of way hee might get to shew her his minde. The Lady perceiuing that, she wrot a

Letter

Letter and cast it downe to him. And
when he had seene ouer the letter, and
vnderstood the will of the Lady, hee
began to haunt Iusts and Tourna-
ments, and to doo many great and
marueilous acts, that the fame of him
came to the King. And as the King
heard thereof, he sent after him, and said
to him, Sir Knight, I haue heard
much honour of you, if it will please
you to abide and dwell with vs, wee
will giue you large gifts & rewards.
The Knight answered and said, O
the mightie Prince, I am your ser-
uant, would to God that I could doo
any seruice to please your Magnifi-
cence without taking of any reward,
saue one thing before all other I de-
sire. The King sayd, shew it vnto me
boldly what thing it is: the Knight
answered, My Lord sithence it hath
pleased your Highnesse to take me to
your Seruant and one of your noble
Councell, me seemeth that it were ex-

expedient for both our solaces, that I
had a place nigh vnto the wall of the
Castle, that I might at all times be
the more readie at your calling when
you haue need. Then the King sayd
I consent to you, make it as ye think
best. Then went the Knight and hi-
red workemen and made a faire lod-
ging by the wals of the Towes, and
when it was all readie, he made a co-
uenant with a workman for to make
out of his house a secret way into the
Court: and when it was made ready
after his intent, he killed the work-
man because he should not discouer it,
and so went in to the Queen, and did
to her reuerence accordingly, and
talked of many thinges, that at the
end he desired to sleepe by her, which
shee oftentimes denyed, but neuerthe-
lesse she consented to him. After that
the Queen thought, what shall I do
if I should giue knowledge thereof
vnto my husband, there it would be

tyng euils: the one is my shame, and
that peraduenture hee should vtterly
take mee, and driue mee out of his
sight for euer: and the other is, the
death he would slay, for from death
he could not escape, and therefore it is
better that I be still and tell not. The
night after that, as often as it plea-
sed him, went in to the Queene, and did
toill with her, and shee gaue him a
ring, the which the king had giuen
her at her wedding. This knight
euery battell and tournament had
victorie, wherefore hee was and
rode in great fauour with the king,
that hee made him his Steward,
and Gouernor of all his Region and
land. It happened vpon a day that y
king disposed himselfe to goe on hun-
ting, and commaunded his Steward
to make him readie on the Morrow
for to goe with him, whereto he offe-
red himselfe all readie. And vpon the
morrow after they went into the

forrest, & all this day they chaled and followed the wild beasts, that they were so wearie, that the King sat him downe by a Fountaine to rest, and the knight by the King, and fell on sleep by him, hauing the ring vpon his finger, the which the King marked, and knewe. After that the knight perceiued that the King had seene the ring, fayned him sore sicke, and sayd, Sir Lord, I feele my selfe so sore sicke, that if I doe not hastily find some remedie therefore by the meanes of Phisicke, I am but a dead man, and therfore I pray you gille mee leaue for to goe home, vnto whom he sayd, goe my deere friend in Gods name: he anon got vpon his horse, & hasted him to his houle, and went to the Queene, and gaue her againe the King, and told her how the King had marked it and seene it on his finger, and prayed her if she made any question of the King that she should shew it to him. Then

Done

hee went downe againe to his
lodging: and anon after, the King
came to the Queene, and shee recei-
ued him right louingly, and after that
a little time was passed, the King said
to Lady shew mee where the Ring
is that I gaue to you, I desire to see
it. shee sayd, O my Lord, to what in-
tent at this time desire you to see it.
then said he, if ye shew it not to me in-
continent, it shall repent you: then she
rose vp & went to her chest, & brought
the Ring to ỳ King, and when he saw
it he was halfe ashamed, and said vn-
to her: O howe like is the Knights
Ring to this Ring, which I saw vp-
on his finger, and I beleeued that it
should haue been mine, and therfore that was
the cause why I asked it so hastily of
you. And of this ill suspicion I yeild
my selfe guiltie against you my Deere
Lady in this behalfe, for the strength of
the tower deceiued me, for I thought
that no man might come therein

but I my selfe alone: Shee said, my deere Lord wonder not, for one King is like another, and workemen make seldome any worke, but that other make the same, but God forgiue it you that yee haue suspected me, when yee know the strength of the tower, and the keyes you haue alwayes by you, will trust no man therewith. After that the knight ordayned a great dinner, and said to the King, my Lord is so that my Ladie and Loue is come out of my countrey, and I haue to feed a Diner to be made, and I would pray you that at this time ye will do me honour, and take such meate as is in my house. The King sayd, I will gladly doe to you that worshippe and more. The knight was glad therof, and by his secret way went to the Queene and sayd vnto her, my Ladie thus doe, you shall come to my house by my priuie way, and clothe you in rich cloathing, after the man-

of my Country, and you shall sit at the table with the King as my Soueraigne Lady, and make him good cheere, she sayd, as you with I shall all things fulfill. And when the houre of meate was come, and the King from the Castle was comming towardes the Knights house, in the meane time the Queene entred by the secret way into the Knights lodging, and apparelled her after the manner of the Knights Country, and when the King was entred into the house, she saluted and receiued him reuerently, and when that the King had beholden her, hee demaunded of the Knight what woman is this so faire; then the Knight sayd, my Lord it is my Soueraigne Ladie that nowe is come out of my Country after me, I haue tarried long in her seruice, then the Knight set the King at the table as it behoued, and made the Queene to sit by him, and the King thought that it was his

Queene and said within himselfe, O howe like is this woman vnto my wife: so the strength of the tower deceiued him, that hee gaue more faith and credence to the knightes wordes than hee did to his owne eyes. The Queene began to speake and talke to the king, and to stirre him to eate and drinke and make good cheere, and as the king heard her voice, then he said vnto himselfe, O blessed Lord, how like is this woman to my Queene in her behauiour, speech, visage, and in all other things and conditions: yet alway the strength of the tower fayled him. In the end of the feast the knight prayed his Loue to sing a song before the king, and she began to sing a song of Loue: when he heard that, hee knewe her voice, and thought, is not this my wife? how may it be she, haue not I the keyes of the tower my selfe in keeping? and in all the meate time hee sate and stroue

within himselfe, then at the last hee
sayd vnto the knight that hee should
take vp the table, for he had some-
what for to doe, for he was in a great
thought and sore trouble in mind.
The knight answeared and said my
Lord ye make no good cheere, yee are
full of thoughts. And if it please you
wee shall make to you some sport and
solace. And the woman said, please it
you sir King here by vs to tarrie, wee
shall make to you all the sport and so-
lace that we can, like as the Queene
in her solace & comfort. He sayd, take
away the table, for I may no longer
abide. Then the knight at the com-
maundement of the King, tooke vp the
table and thanked them al, & the king
went hastily vnto the Castle, sear-
ching whether the Queen were with-
in or not. And in the meane while the
Queen went vp by her priuie way, &
put off her vppermost Vestures, and
the King found her in the same clos-
thing

thing that her left her alone. Whe
as the King was entred and fou
her, he imbraced and kissed her, an
layd vnto her, this day haue I eate
with my Knight and with his Lo
that is come out of his Countrey, an
hether I was brought vnto this da
mine eyes haue not seene two so li
creatures in all things, as thee is
you, and this meane time I haue be
so much stirred with diuers thinges,
that I could no longer abide ther,
but that I must come and learne wh
ther ye were here or there? then sai
Queen, sir how might you think th
for ye know well that this Tower
fast, stronge ynough, and that no
dee can come in nor out without you,
for ye alone haue alwayes the keyes,
how were it then possible for me to be
there: ye finde sometime one man like
another, and therefore ye should take
some Arguments of mistrustinge or
of suspition, as of late you did of the

Knight. King.

king. The king sayd, that is true, & therefore I knowledge my selfe gylty that I haue mis demed you. After that came to him the knight and said, My Lord, I haue of long time serued your good Grace, and now it is time that I returne againe vnto mine owne countrey, and therefore for all the seruice that I haue done vnto you, I desire of you but one thing to doe for me, that is, that your noble Grace will do me such honor, as to giue vnto me before the Priest, with your owne hand, in the face of the Church, my Lone, whome I intend to wed, who hath followed me out of farre Countreys, and whome I shall bring thether again as my lawfull wife, the which thing will be vnto me great honour and worshippe when I shall come into mine owne countrey. The king answered, that petition and more if you desire it of me, will I gladly doe and fulfill. Then the knight prayed

the

the day of Mariage, at which day this good King came to the Church honourably. The Priest was redie and stood adorned with his vestments, for to solemnize the Matrimony. The Knight had alredy apparelled the Queene in his owne house after his Countreymanner, and had ordayned two Knights for to leade her to the church, they beleeuing that it had been his Paramour, and when they were in the face of the Church the Priest sayd, who shall giue this woman vnto this Knight, then the King sayd, I shall giue her to mine owne Knight, and tooke her by the hande and sayd vnto her, O good woman, you are much like vnto my Queene, and therefore I loue you the better, and also for that you bee my Knights wife, and shall bee of my house, and so put the Queenes hand into the Knights hand: and the Priest after the maner of the Church

bound

bound & wedded them together. And when all this was finished and done, the Knight sayd vnto the King, Sir my shippe that I intend to goe in towardes my Countrey, is all ready to make sayle, wherefore I humbly beseech your most noble Grace, that it will please you for to accompanie my wife thereunto, and that yee will addresse and instruct her to loue mee, and haue me in fauour aboue all other creatures liuing, & the rather for your good exhortation and doctrine. Then the King with a great multitude of people went with them, and accompanyed them vnto the ship: of whose departing to the ship, many of them were sorrowfull. The King began to say vnto the Queene, my most deere friend, hearken nowe well vnto my councell and follow it, for it shall bee for your profit: my Knight hath nowe verie wedded and done to you all the goodshippe that in him is, wherefore

looke

loake that ye loue and honour him a
boue all earthly creatures, as God
hath commaunded, and that ye be
him true & obedient, and as this was
said, he deliuered her vnto the Knight
saying, My blessing goe with you
both, and our Lord keep and conduct
you in safetie to your Country. Then
the Knight and the Queene bowed
and inclyned downe their heads to
the King, & thanked him of all things
and they committed him to God, and
entred into the Ship, and the Mari-
ners hoysted vp their sailes, and sailed
forth afore the winde, so that within
a short time the King had lost y sight
of the Ship, and from thence he went
hastily to the Castle, and visited the
Queene, and when he found her not
he was moued in all the parts of his
hart, and sought all about the towne
and searched till at the last hee found
the hole, or the secret way that the
Knight had made, and as he saw the

hee

her weeping bitterly cryed out & sayd, Alas, alas, this knight in whome I had so great confidence and trust, hath taken away my wife, was I not a foole, that I gaue more fayth vnto his wordes, than I did to mine owne eyes. Then sayd the Empresse, My Lord, haue yee vnderstood what I haue sayd, the Emperor sayd, well in the best wise. Then sayd the Empresse, remember how that he trusted the Knight, and yet he deceiued him: In the same maner wise ye haue confidence in the Seuen wise Maisters & they labour for to destroy mee that am your wife, and ye giue more fayth vnto their wordes, than you doe vnto your owne eyes, for you haue well seene how your son rent and scratched me, wherefore yet I beare and haue the tokens and markes as yee may see, and also you know well how that my accursed sonne hath shamed me, but yee marke not how they defend

him

him in this folly & falshood, therefo
it is to be dread, that it shall happe
to you as it did to the King of whom
to you I haue spoken. The Emper
sayd, I beleeue mine eye better th
their wordes, and therefore I say
you, that to morrow I shall do iust
on him: the next day the Emperou
commanded that his Son should
hanged. Then began again a gre
noise and bewailing amongest the c
mon people for the death of the E
perours onely Son. At last when t
Maister heard and perceiued that
ran to the Officers which led him
the gallowes, and said vnto them,
Deere friends I pray you make no
uer great hast, for I thinke this d
with the grace of God to saue & de
liuer him from peril: and from the
the Maister hasted him towardes t
Emperours palleice, and reuerence
him according to his dutie: but
Emperour with great malice and
dig

Agnation answered to him. Never-
[illegible] for my health, for that
[illegible] for some strangle
and vnname, whome I deliuered
[illegible] well speaking, therefore
[illegible] all be hanged with him: the
[illegible] answered, Sir, the time is
[illegible] thus and so passed
[illegible], therefore I pray of God, you
[illegible] him well, and vnto you the truth saying,
[illegible] that I promise you vpon paine of
[illegible] life (if you will spare him so long)
[illegible] find it not so. Then said the
[illegible], if I might haue my sonne
[illegible], it shall suffice me. I would
[illegible] not longer to liue. Then the
[illegible] said ye shall see and heare all
[illegible], if ye will abide this little time,
[illegible] then shall openly bee knowne the
[illegible] and the strife that hath
[illegible] betwixt vs and the Empresse,
[illegible] then it shall be ended. And if that
[illegible] not call againe your sonne, but

...him to deny ...

...

...

happened on a time that they played together at Chesse, the Knight having a sharpe knife in his hand, and her playing, fortuned to smite her with the knife, that a little blood ran out. Whereupon the Knight knowing his wife died, was sorrowful, and for fear of his wife, fell to the ground in a swound. His wife, cast cold water upon him, and he came a little againe to himself, and said lightly, call the Curate hastily to sacrament, for I must receive the blood that I have seene runne out of your finger, hath smitten the death to my heart, the Priest came and houseled him. And anon after he died without any tarying. Whose Death, there was made great sorrow and lamentation, and specially of the wife, and after that the Obsequies were finished and done orderingly, shee went and lay upon the Graue, and there made the

greatest sorowe in the world, and saith
thee should neuer depart from thence,
but as a Turtle Doue she would keep the
lone of her husband there abide, and
die: then went her Friends vnto her
and sayd, what auayleth thee for
soule to liue and die heere, it is better
that you goe to your house and your
Mines for the loue of God, and that
shall saue your soule, for there is
this place to abide. To whom she an-
swered, be still, yee are vnkind vnto
me, consider yee not how I am from
him seperated & departed by Death
for a little blood that he saw come out
of my hand or finger: and therefore
I shall neuer from hence depart. Her
Friends hearing that, made a little
house or lodging nigh vnto the graue,
and put therein all thinges that
her was necessarie, and went their
wayes, thinking that within a while
she should be weary to bee alone, and
so desolate from all company, that

thereby

heart to wit if thee could finde him any
good counsell. And when he was
that come, he taught him
Madam I am
ry of now to you, and I
to you the letters of
heart, therefore I pray you
loue of God vpon the
ly answere her, O most
Lady, I am come to haue
Lords and Ladies of the Land are
part any man is hanged
of the Gallowes, then
life and goods be in the
How it happened in the
was here both you and
the theefe is stolen from
therefore I pray you
God, giue me your aduise
to doe, he answered, I haue
tion vpon you, for by the Law
lost life and goodes to the

smitten

thus

[illegible] good man more, I shall ryde
[illegible], and dye in his service, and [illegible]
[illegible] stroke hath made off perles all. The
[illegible]ther sayd, my Lord hath ye com-
[illegible]maunded what I have sayd: the Em-
[illegible]perour sayd, right well. Amongst all
[illegible] this hath the world, and the
[illegible]ght rebounded her owne bought-
[illegible] should no more men shame, nor
[illegible]peroz sayd moreover. O my good
[illegible]ther, might I once heare my son
[illegible] I should give no charge of my
[illegible]. Then sayd the Master, to
[illegible]orrow you shall heare him speake
[illegible] you, and he shall shew the reason
[illegible]l the variance betwixt us: & the
[illegible]pes (as I hope) shall be [illegible]
[illegible] Emperour and departed.

[illegible] that *Diocletian* the Emperors Sonne
[illegible]omplained on the Empresse: and
how he excused himselfe of
her complaynt.

And

the

the people thereabout should be gath-
ered, and assembled out of the fields
[illegible] the Child speake, but the same
[illegible] Emperour hearing that made
[illegible] commaundement vpon
[illegible] the Child began to say, O
[illegible] I beseech and pray you,
[illegible] Empresse with all her Chamb-
[illegible] ladies may come and be
[illegible] the Emperour commaunded the
[illegible] with all her Chamberm-
[illegible] without stay: she being in a
[illegible] came with all her Maides,
[illegible] commaunded them to
[illegible] all the people in a rowe, that
[illegible] might see them: then said the Child
[illegible] vp your eies, and behold
[illegible] Chamberm-aid that there stand
[illegible] gresse clothing, whom ye know
[illegible] Empresse loueth best aboue all
[illegible]
whom

whome commaund yee to be vncloa-
thed vnto her naked body afore vs al,
to se what she is: the Emperour said
my decree soon it should shame vs all
a woman to stand naked before vs, the
Lord; if it be a woman it is my shame,
and if not, let the shame abide in her.
When she was vncloathed, they sayd
all it was a man, and so it appeared
in the nether parts, but it greatly
they woondred.

The Declaration of the complaint of the
Emperors Sonne on the Empresse.

Then sayd the Sonne vnto the Fa-
ther, behold this Ribauld that ma-
a night hath lyen with your wife
your Chamber in Adulterie, and
ath defiled your bed, and therefore
e Empresse loued him so well, the
hich you knew not.

When the Emperour saw that, he
as impatient and wroth, so that he
mmaunded that she with the Ry-
ude should be burnt: the Son said,

Lord father make no hast of iudg-
ment before I haue reproued her
that crime she layd vppon me falsely
and that I haue declared how she
vniustly & falsely hath complayned
vpon mee: then sayd the Father
my deere son I commit all the iudg-
ment into your handes. The Son
answered, if she be found false, all
the law shall iudge her, but my dear
Father, when ye sent after mee at the
instance of her, then I with my Sis-
ters beheld the stars in the firmament
and there wee saw, that if I should
speak any words within seuen dayes
I should haue died a shamefull death
and therefore that was the cause I
spake not. And where the Empresse
sayd, and put vnto me that I should
haue oppressed and rauished her, she
lyeth falsely, but shee did her best
to haue caused mee to doe it. And
when shee in no wise could bring me
hereto, she tooke me paper, pen, and

like, and bad me write the cause that
prefuld her; and when that I had
written that I would not do or com-
mit such great and abominable sin,
and would not my Fathers Orchard
defile, then beganne shee to teare her
cloathes and scratch her visage, that
it ran with blood, & cryed with a loud
voice, and layd unto mee the crime,
and blame: When the Emperor hard
this, hee beheld her with a full countenance, & layd to her in this manner,
O thou wretched woman, was it
not sufficient to fulfill thy foule and
lecherous appetite, thou and thy Ri-
baud, but would'st all so have had my
son? Then fell the Empress to the em-
perours feet, and shee cried him mercy:
the Emperour layd, O thou cursed &
most unhappy woman, thou al-best
virginelle, & thou art worthy to bee
slaine, for thou hast deserued to die
in three manner of wayes. The first
is, that thou hast done adulterie: the

seconde is, that thou hast prouoked and stirred my Sonne to sinne, and hast to him imputed and layd the crime falsely and vntruely: and the thirde, that thou hast euerie day entised and prouoked mee with thy false tales to put him to death, and therefore the Law shall haue his course on thee, and iudge thee vnto death. Then sayd the Son, Father ye know well that for the leasing that he laied vpon mee, I was dayly led vnto hanging, but God with the helpe of my Maisters hath deliuered mee. O my most honourable Father, it was sayd vnto you by the Empresse that I would also by the helpe of my Maisters depose you out of your Empire, and that I laboured to destroy you, and for to set mee in your place, should not you then haue forrowed? You haue the Empire to gouerne, and wherefore should I not helpe you my most deere Father? for from you I haue my liuing,

uing, and I shall hold and repute you
for my soueraigne Lord and Father
during the terme of my life, and I will
not in any manner depryue you of your
honour, but I shall labour and busie
my selfe about the gouernaunce of the
same, and all your commaundements
I shall fulfill in euery thing: but it is
likewise wise as þ Father that cast his
Son into the sea for to drowne him,
because he sayd that hee in time com-
ming should be his Lord, and yet the
Son by the helpe of God was saued
and was made a greater Lord than
he was, and yet was no hinderance
to the Father, but profit, also ye should
not remember that my life & gouer-
naunce shall neuer hinder you, but it
shall bee to your great solace and ioy.
Then sayd the Emperour, blessed be
almighty God, and the houre that I
did begat you, and deserued to haue
such a Son that I finde so wise and
good in all things: tell me now an ex-

mple, by the which I may perfectly
vnderstand thy wolledome, and that
mine heart may the better ioy in thee.
Then sayd the Son, first commaund
saluue to your people, that I bee not
letted in my woundes till that I haue
done: and when that is ended, giue
sentence with eight cursnesse of the
law vpon me, and vpon the Emperor.
Then commaunded the Emperor to
leaue, and the childe began to tell in
manner as hereafter followeth.

The Example of Diocletian the Emperours Sonne.

There was a knight which had
but one Son that he loued right
tenderly in the beginning as ye would
all onely haue loued mee, whome he
deliuered to a Maister of fayre con-
troys to norisshe and to learne, the child
wared wise, and profited much, and
grew as well in learning as in bodi-
ly wheele he had dwelt with his Mai-
ster vii. yeres, his father desired to

him

hym, and sent Letters to hym that he
shuld come again into his Country
and visite his friendes, in like wise as
ye have sent for me. The Child was
obedient to his Father, & came at his
commaundement, at whose comming
hee ioyed much, for that hee was as
well growne in his membres, as in
Doctrine, to euerie man hee appeared
pleasant and gentle. It happened
upon a day, that the Father and the
Mother sitting at the table, and the
Child serving them, a Nightingale
came flying afore the window where
they sate, & began to sing so sweet
that they maruayled, & the knight
sayd, O how sweetly this bird singe
eth, well were him that could vnder
stand his song, & could shew the inter
pretation thereof: then the Son said,
My worshipfull Father, the song of
the Nightingale I could well declare
but I feare your displeasure. The
father sayd, say hardly my Sonne

the interpretation of the bird, & then ye shall proue whether I shall bee angry & not, but I shall marke well the reason of mine anger: and when the son heard that, he sayd, the Nightingale had said in his song, that I shall bee euer a great Lord that shalbe honoured & worshipped of all men, and Lorde of my Father, the which shall bring water for to wash my hands: and my mother shall hold the Towell. Then the Father sayd, thou shalt neuer see the day such seruice of vs to haue, nor none such dignitie shall follow thee, and in great malice and woodnesse, he tooke his son vpon his shoulder, and ran to the Sea, and cast him in, and sayd, lye there the interpreter of the birds song. The Child could swim, and swimmed to a Land where hee was foure dayes without meate or drinke: the fift day there came a ship sayling, and as the Child saw that, hee called vnto the shipmen

and sayd, for ye loue of God deliuer me from the perill of death, the shipmen saw that it was a faire young man, they had compassion on him, & went with their boate and set him a boord, & into far Countreys with them they led him, and sold him there to a Duke. The Child grewe goodly and faire, and the Duke loued him much, and had him greatly in his saueur. Upon a time the King of that Realm let call an assembly of all the great Lords & Noblemen of his Land to a generall Counsell. This Duke prepared and ordayned him to go to the Counsell, & tooke the wit and wisedome of the Child, and took the Child with him. And when they were all gathered & assembled before the king in his counsell. My welbeloued Lords & friends sayd the King, will yee wit the cause wherefore that I haue called you to this Counsell? then sayd they all, we bee all fourthrighte Lord at your com-

maun-

maundement. Then the king sayd, it is a secret matter that I shall shew you, if that any man can open it, and declare what it signifieth, I sweare & promise vnto him by my crowne that I will giue to him mine only daughter in mariage, and he shall be my fellow in my Realme during my life, and after my death he shall haue and possesse all my whole kingdome: and the misterie of the Counsell is this, three Rauens still follow mee, where soeuer that I goe, they leaue me not but cry with such horrible voices that it is great paine for me to heare them, and to behold their lookes, therefore if there bee any man which knoweth the cause of their following, and can shewe what they meane by their crying, and void them away from me, without doubt I shall fulfill the promise that I haue made. And as the king had thus sayd, there was none found in all the Counsaile that

vnder-

vnderstood the cause, or could moone or put away the Rauens, Then said the Child vnto the Duke, My Lord, thinke you that the King will hould his promise, if I accomplish his will and desire. Then the Duke sayd, I thinke he will performe that he hath promised, but will ye that I giue the King knowledge of you what ye can doe. Then the Child sayd, I will my life set in pledge, and I shall performe and make it good that I haue saide. When the Duke heard that, he went to the King and sayd, My Lord the King, here is a young man that is right cunning and wise, the which promiseth for to satisfie and fulfill in all thinges your desire as touching the Rauens, if you will fulfill that which you haue promised: the King swears by the Crowne of the Kingdome, that which I haue promised in all thinges shall be fulfilled. Then brought the Duke the Child before the

King,

King, and when the King saw him, he spake vnto him, O faire Child, can ye giue answere to my Question: the Child sayd, yea my Lord in the best wise. Your question, wherefore that the Rauens follow you, and horribly call vpon you, I answere thereto: vpon a time it happened two Rauens a Male & a Female, had brought forth betweene them the third Rauen, and in that place was so great Famine and scarsitie of all manner of things that men, beasts and fowles died, and perished for default. The third Rauen that time being young in the nest, the Mother left it, seeking where she might best get her liuing; and came no more to the neast: the male Rauen seeing that, with great penurie and labour fed the yong Rauen till he was able to flye, and when the deere time was past and gone, then the Female Rauen came againe to the young Rauen, and would hould fellowship and

companie with him, and as the male Rauen saw that, hee would haue driuen her away, saying thus, that shee in his great miserie and necessitie left him and his companie, and therefore now shee should want his companie and fellowship. Shee alleaged and sayd, that she had in his birth great labour and sorrow, and suffered penurie, and therefore of his companie she should rather ioy than the Father. For this my Soueraigne Lord they follow you, asking right Iudgement which of them both shall haue the young Rauen in their companie, and this is the cause of their horrible clamour and noyse that they make daily vpon you. But my Lord had you vpon a right wise sentence giuen, you shold neuer more see them or be troubled with their crying. Then sayd the King, because that the Mother hath left and forsaken the young Rauen in his most necessitie, it stan-

deth

deth with reason and Iustice, that sh
shall want & be without his fellow
ship: and where she sayth, that in th
bearing and birth of him, shee ha
great paine & trauell, that helpeth he
not, for the paine was turn'd into m
as soon as she saw the young Rauen
in ỹ world. But for ỹ the Male is th
cause of production and generation
euerie beast, & also because the you
rauen in his necessity was sustained
fed into the retouering & nourishing
his body, by the male, therfore I gi
for a Iudgement and a sentẽce Di
nitiue, that the yong rauen shall ab
& hold company with the Father, a
not with the Mother. And when th
rauens heard this sentẽce, with gre
noyse & cry they flew vp into the ai
and were no more seen or found in
that region. When this was done th
King demanded of ỹ yong man wh
his name was, hee answered, I a
cpiled Alexander, then sayd the Ki

I will haue one thing of you, that ye from henceforth shall name and take me, and none other for your Father, for you shall marrie my Daughter, & ye shall be possessor of all my Realme. The young Alexander abode & dwelled still there with the King, and euerie man had to him fauour and loue, for he began to haunt & occupy himselfe in Iusts & Tourneys, wherein at all times he had the prize aboue all other that were in Egypt, so that his Peere or like was not found, & there was not so hard nor so obscure a question put vnto him, but that hee could assoyle it. At that time was there an Emperour named Tytus, that excelled in gentlenesse, courtesie, and curiositie of all other Emperors, Kings, & Princes in the world, insomuch that such fame and noise flew and ran ouer the world of it, that whatsoeuer hee was that would profite in cunning, manners, or behauiour, that he should

go to the Emperors court. And when Alexander heard that, hee sayd to the King, My most honourable Fathers Lord, ye wote well the world is full of fame of the Emperor, that it is delectable to abide & dwell in his court wherefore if it please you my Lord and Father, I would gladly go to the court, that I might be wiser & prompter in manners and behauiour than I am. Whereupon answeared the King, it pleaseth me right well, but I would that yee take with you plentie of Gold and Siluer and other necessaries so much that ye mine honour there may saue, and that ye may haue also that is to you requisite and necessarie. And also me seemeth it were expedient that before your departing you should marrie my Daughter.

Then answeared Alexander, will it please you my Lord to spare mee at this time, and at my comming home againe, I shall wed her with all honour

nour as vnto her appertained. The king answered, sithen it is your will to goe into the Emperors Court, I licence you, and thereto I consent. Alexander tooke leaue of the king, and tooke with him of Treasure aboundance, and then he went to the Emperours Court, & when he was come with a faire companie, hee went afore the Emperor, & fell vpon his knees, & saluted him; and did him reuerence. The Emperour rose vp from his seat imperiall and kissed him, and asked him of whence, and what hee was, and wherefore hee was come? he answered & sayd, I am Son & Heire to the king of Egypt, and am come to do seruice to your most high Maiestie, if it please you to accept of mee. The Emperour sayd that hee was right welcome, and committed him to his Steward, and made him his caruer. The Steward ordayned him a faire Chamber, & prouided him all thinges

that were necessarie to the same, and Alexander behaued himselfe so well, that in short time hee was beloued of all people.

Not long after that, came the kings Sonne of France to doe seruice to the Emperor, & to learne nurture, him the Emperour receiued honourably, and demaunded his name, and of what kindred he was come, he answeared I am Sonne to the king of Fraunce, I haue to name Lodowike your seruant. Then said the emperor, I haue made Alexander my Caruer, & ye shall be my Cupbearer that alway ye shall doe seruice afore me at the Table: and commanded his Steward to assigne him a lodging, whom he placed with Alexander in his Chamber, these were so like in stature, in visage, & in condition, that vneth the one might be discerned from the other, but that Alexander was more cunninger in all his deedes, than was Lodowike,

for

for hee was a feminine man & shamefast, and these two young men looued well together.

The Emperour had one onely Daughter named Florentine, she was right faire and gracious and should be his Heire, whome hee loued entirely, she had a Court by her selfe, and Seruants to her alligned, to her the Emperour euerie day was accustomed to send from his Table of his dainties in token of loue, by Alexander: insomuch that the Daughter beganne to haue him maruaylously in her fauour, because of his wisedome & gracious behauiour. It happened vpon a day Alexander at meate time had such businesse, that he serued not at the Table, nor none other gaue attendance for him in his roome: Lodowike perceiued that, and serued in his roome, and as he had serued the Emperour in his last seruice on his knee, the Emperor commanded him to beare a

dish to his daughter as he was wont to doe, thinking him to bee Alexander: then tooke Lodowike the dish & went to the Pallace of ỳ emperors daughter, and saluted her with great reuerence, and set the meat before her, but till that time he had not seene her: she perceyued anon that hee was not Alexander, and said to him on this manner, what is your name, & whose Son are ye? he answeared to her and said, Madame, I am the Kinges Sonne of Fraunce, & my name is Lodowike, shee said, I thanke you of your labor. & he tooke his leaue & departed: in the meane time came Alexander to the table, & they fulfilled their seruice. The Dinner done, anon Lodowike went to his bed sore sicke, & Alexander perceiuing that, went to his Chamber, and sayd to him. O my best beloued Freend and fellow Lodowike, howe is it with you, and what is the cause of your infirmitie? Hee answeared

him

him and sayd, the cause I know not, but I feele me so sicke that I feare me I cannot escape the death: Alexander sayd, the cause of your infirmity & disease I know well, for to day whē as yee bare the meat vnto the Emperors Daughter, yee beheld her visage & beautie so feruently, that your heart is taken and rauished with her loone. Whereupon he answeared, O Alexander, all the Phisitions in the world, could not more truely iudge my sicknesse, but I feare it will be my death. Then said Alexander, be of good comfort, and I shall helpe you vnto my power, and went vnto the Market, & bought with his own money a faire cloth set with precious Stones, vnknowing to Lodowike, and presented it in his behalfe vnto the mayden. As she saw that, she asked him where he had that costly and precious cloth: and he sayd, Madame, of the sonne of the most Christian King, who

sendeth it vnto you, for your Loue, for he, but for one sight that hee hath had of you, is so sicke that he lyeth vppon his bed vnto the death, and therefore if ye suffer him to perish, yee shall neuer recouer againe your honour.

Then sayd shee, O Alexander would you thus counsaile mee that I should so loose my virginitie, God defend that, and bee yee sure Alexander that of such messuages yee shall neuer more winne thankes of mee, therefore goe ye out of my sight, and speake no more thereof to me: when Alexander heard that, hee did obeysance, and departed. The next day Alexander went againe to the Citie, and bought a Chaplet that was two times more in value than the Cloth, & therwith he went to the maidens chamber & gaue it to her on the behalfe of Lodowike. And when shee sawe that costly gift, she sayd vnto him in this manner: I maruayle of you, that so often times as

as you haue seene and spoken with me, that you haue not done your own errand in speaking for your selfe, but for another. Then answeared he, O Madame, I haue not beene so disposed because my birth is not to be compared with yours, and also it happened me neuer such a case, that my heart was so wounded, and he that hath a good fellowe, is bound for to do him good and true fellowship, and therefore most excellent Princesse, of your most aboundant pitie haue compassion on him, and make him whole that you haue sore wounded to the death, that it bee not for euer layd vnto your crueltie and unpiteous heart. Shee answeared him, goe your way for at this time I will giue you none answeare thereof, and as hee heard that, he tooke his leaue and departed. And the thirde day hee went to the Market and bought a girdle, that was more in value and costlier than

the Chaplet was, and presented it to her on the behalfe of Lodowike, and when she saw and beheld that so precious, she sayd vnto Alexander, say to Lodowike that he come to my Chamber about the third houre in the night and hee shall find the doze open: and Alexander hearing that was glad, and went to his fellow and sayd, my best beloued fellow bee of good comfort, for I haue conquered the Mayden to you, and this night I shall bring you vnto her Chamber: & when that was sayd, he started vp as though he was wakened out of his sleepe, & was well reuiued, and for great ioy hee was made whole: the next night following Alexander tooke Lodowike, & brought him vnto the Chamber of the Lady, with whome hee was in solace & ioy all the night, and from that time forth all her heart was vpon him, so that there was but one loue betwixt them both. And after that, Lodo-

wike

wike vsed often times to visite her, so that it came by processe of time to the eares of the Knights of the Court, how that the Emperours Daughter was knowne by Lodowike, and conspired amongst themselues how that they might therewith find him, and so to take him and slay him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, hee armed him to withstand them: and when the knightes vnderstood that, they fearing Alexander, suffered his fellow for to goe in peace. Alexander many times put himselfe in ieopardie for him, hee not knowing thereof, but the Mayd knew it well. In short time after that, there came letters to Alexander, of the death of the King of Egipt, that he should hastily come and receiue his Kingdome with honour and ioy, and that shewed he anon to the maiden and to Lodowike, & also of his departing, whereof they were sorrowfull & heauie: he sayd also

so vnto the Emperour, my most honorable Lord, pleaseth it you for to vnderstand that I haue receiued Letters of the death of my Father, wherfore it behoueth me to go and receiue the kingdome, & that yee will licence mee to depart, and for all benefites to mee done, I offer my selfe and all my goods, and rather then I shold by my going, any way offend or displease you my Lord, I shall forsake all my realme & al that I haue in the world, & abide with you still. Then said the Emperor, know yee for certaine, that of your departing I am right heauy, for yee were the best Seruant that was in al my house, but it becommeth not an Emperor to let his Seruants from their promotions or aduaunce-ments, but sooner to promote them to higher & greater honour. Therefore goe you vnto our Treasorer, and hee shall deliuer you as much gold as ye will haue, and in the name of God

and

and with my blessing goe into your Countrey. And thus Alexander had leaue of the Emperour, and bad him farewell, and many of the Court were sorrowfull of his departing, for of all hee was beloued, Lodowike with the Maiden brought him on his way well vii. miles: after that, Alexander would not suffer them to goe further, then fell they both to the ground with great sorrow, and Alexander tooke and lift them both vp againe from the earth, & comforted them with faire & sweete words, & sayd: O Lodowike, my most best beloued fellow, I warne you that the secrets beeing betwixt you and my Ladie, yee hide and keepe them as priuily as yee may, and take good heede to all thinges, for I wote another shall come and be in my stead that shall enuie you of the fauour and grace that ye stand in with the Emperour, & day and night shall lie in wait to take you with a fault, and to put

you to a rebuke: then answeared Lodowike and said, O Alexander I shall beware as much as to me is possible, but how shall I now doe, when I want your companie, therefore one thing I shall desire of you, that ye take this Ring of mee for a remembrance. Then sayd he, I shall for the loue of you gladly receiue the Ring, & yet should I neuer without the Ring forget you, & so comitted them to God. Then they embraced ech other about the necke and kissed, and so departed from other. Not long after the Kings Sonne of Spaine named Guydo, was receiued of the Emperor in the rowme and place of Alexander, to whome the Steward assigned Alexanders place and Chamber, the which was verie sore against the will of Lodowike, but hee could not amend it. Guydo, seeing that Lodowike against his will had him in his fellowship, anon he had enuy against him, so

Lo-

Lodowike of a long time for feare of the sayd Guydo, kept him out of the companie of the Maid. Neuertheles afterwarde ouercome with the loue of the Mayden, sometime haunted & went againe to her as hee before time had done: Guydo shortly perceyuing the same, wayted so long thereon, that he knew the troth, & was therefore in suertie, that the Mayden was by Lodowike knowne, & had accompanyed with her. Vppon a time it happened that the Emperour stood in his Hall, & praysed Alexander of his gentleness and wisedome. Guydo hearing that, hee sayd. My Lord hee is not much woorthie to bee commended as you weene, for he hath been a long while a traytor in your house. Then ỳ Emperour sayd, tell me how? Guydo said, yee haue but one Daughter onely, the which shall bee your Heire, and her Lodowike hath defiled, and lyen by, through the help of Alexander, and he goeth

goeth to her euery night as it pleaseth him. And so soone as the Emperour heard that, he was sore moued, & began to bee angry, & it happened Lodowike vppon the same time to come through the hall, and as the Emperor sawe him hee sayd, what heare I of thee thou euill and vntrue body, if it be found and proued true, thou shalt dy the most shamefull death that can be deuised. Lodowike sayd, my Lord the Emperor, what is the cause? Guydo answeared, I say and depose here before my lord against thee, that thou hast defiled his onely Daughter, and euerie night thou goest to her, and doest Fornication with her, and that in battell I shall proove and make it good vppon thy body with my bodie. Then sayd Lodowike, I am innocent and not infective in the crime, and falsely thou lyest vppon me, and thereupon I hold thee battell, and I trust to God thy falshoode shall come

vpon

vppon thine owne head. Then the Emperour alligned them the day of Combat. That done Lodowike went vnto the Mayden, and shewed to her the cause of the day of battell by the Emperour alligned, and in what maner Guydo had him accused, and sayd to her: Now it behoueth me to haue your Counsell, or else I must die, for as you know, it had not auayled mee to haue gaine-sayd the battell, without I should haue yeelded my selfe guilty: Guydo is strong and hardy, that his like is none but Alexander, and I am feeble, and therefore if I hold the Battaile against him, I am but a dead man, & so yee shall abide shame & rebuke. Then said she, folow my counsaile in that ye mistrust your selfe, goe hastily vnto my Father and say to him, that yee haue receiued Letters, whereby that yee are assured that the Lord your Father is sore sicke, & lieth vpon his death-bed, and desireth

to see you & speake with your person, and to dispose his kingdome and his goods before hee depart out of this life: and so desire his licence for ỹ loue of your Father, that you might go visite him, and that he will prolong and lengthen the day of battell, that in the meane season you may goe and come: & when ye haue obtayned his licence, as hastily as you may, secretly goe to King Alexander, and when yee are come to him, take him apart and shew him the cause of your comming, and require him in this your vtter extremity that hee will helpe and saue vs. And when Lodowike had heard her counsel, it pleased him well, and he did thereafter: his leaue gotten, & longe day and respite of the battell prefixed and assigned, he departed & tooke his iourney towardes the Realme of Egypt, and neuer stayd day nor night, till hee came vnto King Alexanders Castle. And when that King Alexander

der had vnderstanding of his comming, hee was much glad and went to meete him, and receiued him honorably, & had wonder of his comming. Then sayd Lodowike, O my deere Lord and my best beloued Friend, my life and my death is in your handes, for as yee said to mee before, that I shold haue another fellow, the which should lye in waight to espy me, and to destroy me, without I looked ỹ wiselyer to my selfe: so, as long as I might, I absented mee, till I could no longer: but afterwards the Kings Sonne of Spayne made watch so long on me, till that hee perceiued the truth. In the end he accused me vnto the Emperor, so that on the Eight day hereafter from this day, I must be ready & prepare me to fight with him bodie against bodie: and as ye know well, hee is a stronge and an hardy man, and I am weake & feeble, and therefore hath Florentine counsay-

led mee that I should not hide this matter from you, for she knoweth you for a faithful Freend, and that ye would not leaue vs in this necessitie. Then said Alexander, is there any bedie that knoweth of your cõming vnto mee for this matter more then Florentine? he answeared him and sayd, no creature liuing, for I took leaue of the Emperour to go visit my Father, lying grieuously sicke. Then asked Alexander him, what counsell hath Florentine giuen to you, how and in what wise I might help you? He sayd, O most constant and faithfull Freend, in this wise shee hath counselled mee, considering that we be like, that you should come & doe the battaile with him, and no man shall know you, but shee, and the battaile done, I shall come againe to the Court and yee to your country. Then he asked when the day should be of the battaile, and he said, eight dayes hence. Then said

Alex-

Alexander, if I should this day tary, then can I not come by the day prefixed. Wherefore see what I shall do, I haue bidden all my subiects, that to Morrow they should come to my wedding, and if I should goe, then is the day lost, if I go not and doe ꝑ battell, then Florentine and yee are both vndone, what thinke yee now best for to doe? When Lodowike heard that hee fell to the earth, and began to sigh and sorrowe out of measure, saying: sorrow and heauinesse come to me on all sides. Then sayd Alexander vnto him be of good comfort, for I shall not forsake you after such a sort, though I should loose my life and kingdome, but harken what I haue thought: insomuch as we are both like, so that ꝑ one of vs cannot be knowne from the other, but we both together alike, & I am not yet greatly knowne here, but my Barons & other folke shal take you for me, therefore here shall ye abide &

tarie and marry my wife in my stead and hold the feast and bridall, and do in all things euen as though I were there my selfe present, Except when as yee come to bedde with my wife, looke that ye be there true and faithfull, and I shall without tarying goe and take my Horse and ride thether whereas the battell shall be, & if God giue me the victorie that I may ouercome & vanquish your enemie, I shall come againe secretly, and ye shall goe againe to your best beloued. This done, Alexander bad Lodowike farewell, and tooke his iourney towards the Emperors Court for to fight and doe the battell with Guydo, and Lodowike abode in Egypt in the stead of king Alexander. And vppon the next Morning came Lodowike as though it had beene king Alexander and there solemnly in the face of the Church espoused Alexanders wife, and solemnized the marriage feast, with

with great royaltie of delicates and precious meates, plentie of all manner of wines, and diuers melodies of Instruments of Musicke, and made great ioy and cheere for the noblemen and of al other people that were there assembled. And when the night was come he went to bed with the Queene and layd betweene him and her a naked Sword whereof shee had great wonder but nothing shee sayd, and so hee lay with her euerie night, as longe as Alexander was out. Then king Alexander at the day that was prefixed and set, came vnto the Emperour and sayd, O most Soueraigne Lord it is so, that I haue left my father right sicke, Neuertheless I am come for to defend my Honour, and my promise to performe. The Emperor said yee do right well, according to a Noble man, and fortune shall fauour you in your iust and righteous quarrell. And when the Em-

perours Daughter vnderstoode that Alexander was come, anon shee sent for him, & when he was come to her, she embraced him, and with ioy and gladnesse she kist him, and blessed the time that shee might see him againe, & demaunded of him where he had left her friend and Louer Lodowike: then hee declared vnto her all the processe, and how hee had left him King in his Realme: and so took his leaue of her, & went to Lodowikes chamber, & there was no creature, that thought otherwise but it was Lodowike, onely except Florentine: the next day following before Alexander went vnto the battaile, he sayd vnto the Emperour in presence of Guydo, My most redoubted Soueraigne Lord, this Guydo hath falsely and vntruely accused mee vnto your Noble Grace, that I should bee of such acquaintance with your Daughter, that should be vnto the dishonour of your most Noble

person

person & hers, & vnto that I sweare and affirme by the holie Euangelists that she was neuer in such manner of wise by me knowen, as he hath alleaged & informed to you, and that this day with the aid and helpe of God, I shall proove and make good vpon his body. Then said Guido, yet once I say againe, and sweare by the holy Euangelists, & by all that God hath made, that thou hast had knowledge & hast defiled the Emperors daughter, and that I shall make good vpon thy head. Whereupon they leapt vpon their Coursers, and fiercely ran together with their Speares, that they both brake and shiuered in peeces, and then drew their swords and fought so long together, vntill at the last Alexander with a great might & strength at one stroke smote of Guydoes head, and sent it vnto the Emperours daughter, whereof shee was right glad, and bare it to her Father,

and sayd, Father behold the head of him that you and mee hath so falsely defamed. When the Emperor perceiued the victory, anon hee sent for Alexander whom he thought to haue been Lodowike and sayd: O Lodowike this day your honour and my daughters ye haue saued, ye shall stand and be to morrow in my grace and fauor, and whatsoeuer he bee that hereafter shall againe defame you, hee shall for euer stand in my indignation. Alexander said, God helpeth and saueth them that trust in him, & alway weaketh the blood vndefectiue or innocent: but nowe most vndoubted Lord, of one thing I require you: at my departing fro my father I left him sore sick, that it will like you for to licence me to goe and see how it standeth with him, & if that hee be any thing amended, I shall incontinent come againe: then the Emperour sayd, that pleaseth me well, but yee may in no manner wise

leaue

leaue mee, from henceforth I cannot be without your presence. Alexander tooke leaue of the Emperor, and bad him farewell, and rode againe to his Realme, who when Lodowike sawe, hee made great cheere and gladnesse, and friendly receiued him and sayd, O most true friend of all Freends, tell mee howe you haue done and sped in your iourney and need, and what end ye haue brought it to: then said he, go to the Emperor and serue as yee haue done before, I haue gotten you more grace and fauour of him, than euer ye had before time, and I haue also smit off the head of your most enemie and aduersarie. Then sayd Lodowike, ye haue not onely at this time saued my life, but many times heretofore, the which as yet I cannot deserue, but God reward you, and so departed: and went againe to the Emperour, and there was no man that knew of the absence of Alexander, saue onely

Lodo-

Lodowike. And when the night was come, hee went to bed to the Queene, and anon he had with her sweete and friendly words, and embraced and kissed her: then sayd shee, you haue made this time alll too long, in that ye haue shewed nothing of friendship or loue, how may this be? Then said he, wherefore say ye that, she sayd, euery night as I was in my bed, you haue layd betwixt you & mee a naked sword, and yee haue neuer tasted nor turned you towards mee more than now. And when the King heard that, he thought on the truth of his fellow, and sayd vnto her, O my most deere Ladie and Queene, it was not done for any euill will, but for a good probation, and for a perpetuall loue: but she thought in her selfe, that loue shall you neuer more haue of mee, but that despight she thought I shall reuenge vpon thee. Then there was a Knight that she afore had a little loue and fa-

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uour vnto, and she began for to loue him more & more, so long till at ỳ last they thought and imagined how they might destroy and slay the King, and therefore they got poyson & poysoned the King, so that if he had not been right strouge of complexion, hee had dyed thereof, but it wrought in him so sore, that it caused him to bee a most fowle and horrible Leaper, as euer was seene vppon the earth. The Lords and Noblemen of his realme, and the Queene also seeing this, despised him, and sayd that it behooued not a Leaper to raigne vppon vs, for hee should not procure nor ingender any faire or cleane heires, and so hee was deposed of his dignitie Royall, and driuen out of his Realme. In the mean time died the emperor of Rome, and Lodowike maryed his Daughter, and after that, Lodowikes father dyed, so that Lodowike Raigned both Emperour, and King of Fraunce

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at once. When king Alexander heard that, he thought in himselfe, now my fellow raigneth together vppon the Empire and Realme of Fraunce, to whom may I go better thā vnto him for whom many times I haue ventured my life: And vppon a night he rose vp and made him ready, and took with him his staffe and clapper, and went toward the emperors country, and when hee was come nigh to the gate, he sat him among other lazers, abiding the giuing of the almes, and on a season as the Emperor went out of his Pallace, all the poore lazers beganne to ring their clappers, and the good king Alexander did like to the other, but there was no almes giuen to them. He tarried so long vnto the time that the Emperor was set, and serued at the table. Then went king Alexander vnto the gate, and knocked thereat, & the Porter asked who was there. Alexander answeared him, I

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am a poore despised man, but for the loue of God I require you, that yee turne not your sight from my visage, & that ye will for the reward of God, doe my message vnto the Emperour: he asked what is the matter: Alexander sayd, go and tell him heere is a lazer that is right horrible to see, the which prayeth him for the loue of god & king Alexander that he will graunt him this day to eate his almes before him vpon the earth in his hall.

The Porter said, I wonder that ye dare desire that of my Lord, for why all the hall is full of Lordes and Noble men, and if they behold you, they should all abhorre and leaue their meate: But forasmuch as yee haue required mee so profoundly, for the loue of God I shall goe and doe your errand whatsoeuer happen thereof, and so hee went foorth before the Emperor and did his message: when the Emperor heard the Porter name

Alex-

Alexander the King of Egypt, he said to his Porter, go bring him afore me, how horrible that soeuer his Visage bee, and ordaine him a place before me that hee may eat his meate before mee in my presence. The Porter brought him anon, & ordained him a place and set him to meate before the Emperour: and when hee was well refreshed, hee sayd vnto one of the Emperours Seruants, My deere Friend doe mee this errand vnto the Emperour, say vnto him that I pray him for the loue of God & King Alexander, that hee will send me his cup of wine. The seruant sayd, for the loue of God I shall doe it, but I beleeue it will not bee, for if ye once drinke of my Lords cup, he will no more drinke of the same, neuertheleſſe hee did the errand. Anon as the Emperour heard him name King Alexander, hee commaunded his Cup to bee filled of the best wine, and bare it to him, the

which

which Wine when hee had receiued, he put it into his bottell, and took his Ring that Lodowike had giuen vnto him and put it into the Cup, and sent it againe to the Emperor. And when the Emperour saw the Ring, anon he knewe that it was the same that hee had giuen to Alexander in friendship when hee departed from him, and thought in his hart that Alexander is dead, or else this man is maruailously come to the Ring, and commaunded anon that the Lazer shold not depart till the time that hee had spoken with him, for in no wise hee could haue knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander. After that the Dinner was done and ended, the Emperour tooke the sicke man apart, and asked how he came by the Ring? Alexander demaunded if he knew well the Ring. The Emperour sayd, I know it right well. Alexander sayd, wote yee also vnto whome you haue giuen

it: The Emperor said, I wote right well: how is it then sayd Alexander that ye know not me, for I am Alexander, vnto whome ye gaue the same Ring: when the Emperor heard that, he fell to the ground for sorrow, & tare his robes and cloathes, and with great sighings and bewaylings sayd, O Alexander yee bee the one halfe of my Soule, where is your goodly and delicate bodie, now so vncleane and wretchedly infected, that was so faire and pleasant to behold: he answeared, this is to mee happened for the great fidelitie that you haue done to mee in my bed with my wife, when you layd a naked Sword betwixt you and her, wherefore shee became wroth & hated me, that she & a knight that afore time shee ought loue vnto haue impoysoned me as you may see, and moreouer they haue driuen mee out of my realme. And when the emperor heard that, he for loue took him about

about the necke and kissed him, and sayd, O my most entirely beloued Brother, I sorrow to see you in this great sicknesse and miseries, would to God I might die for you: but my most deere Friend suffer patiently a little time till that wee haue sent for all the Phisitions and wise Masters in Phisicke to haue their counsell and aduise if there be any remedie or hope of recouering of your health: and if it bee possible to helpe you, wee shall neither spare Empire, Lordshippe, nor other goods temporall, to make you whole and sound. In the meane while hee was brought into a faire chamber richly apparelled, & appointed of all manner of things that were requisite & necessarie for his ease and health. And in all hast hee sent his messengers through all parts of the world, for ỳ most expert Phisitians that might be found: of whom within a Moneth were come & assembled

before the Emperour Thirtie, which were right expert and subtile in that science: to whom the Emperour sayd, my welbeloued Maysters I haue a frend that greeuously is infected with a leapzosie, whome I would right fayne were healed and made sound, and nothing would spare, neyther for Gold nor siluer, nor all the other goods that I haue in this world, but I would giue it to recouer his health. The Maisters answeared and sayd, all that euer is possible to be done by Phisicke you shall soone vnderstand after that we haue seene the Person: and forthwith as they had seene him and perceiued the cause and matter of the infirmitie, they iudged the disease incureable for all the Maysters liuing. And when the Emperor heard that, he was right sorrie in his heart, and committed it vnto the help of almightie God, calling vnto him religious men and poore people, and other

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deuout persons, and desired them to pray to God that he would vouchsafe to make whole his friend the sooner for their good deeds and prayers: and he himselfe with many other fasted & prayed humbly to almightie God for the health of his friend. Vppon a day as king Alexander was in prayers, there came vnto him a voyce saying, if the Emperour will with his owne hands slay his two sonnes which his wife hath borne him at one burthen, and wash thy body with the bloode of them, thy flesh shall bee as faire and cleane as the flesh of the litle children. When as king Alexander had heard this, hee thought in himselfe, this vision is not expedient to bee shewed, for it is sore against nature that any man should slay his owne Sonne for recouering of the health of a strange man. The Emperor night & day lay in his prayers with great deuotion, and prayed to God for the remedie of

King Alexander. So that at the last the came a voice vnto him and sayd, how long shall yee thus crie and call vpon me when it was openly shewed and notised vnto Alexander how that hee shall be made whole: The Emperor hearing that, went vnto Alexander, and said, Of all freends the best and most true, blessed bee the most high God, the which neuer fayleth them that call and trust on him, of whom I haue knowledge, that it is shewed vnto you how & in what wise that yee may bee made whole, wherefore I pray you that you will openly shew it vnto me, that wee may ioy together, & if ye neede any thing thereto that I may doe, I shall fulfill it vnto my power, and for your health giue all that I haue. Alexander said, Sir I dare not shew it vnto you, how that I may bee cured or healed of my malady, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against nature for to bee done, therefore

fore I will not shew it to you, howbeit I haue great trust and confidence in you. The Emperor sayd, Alexander trust in mee, for whatsoeuer is possible for to bee done for the recouering of your health, I shall doe it, & therefore hide nothing from me. Then said Alexander, I haue of God knowledge, that if you will slay your two sonnes with your owne handes, and wash me in their blood, I shall bee whole: & therefore I haue not shewed it vnto you, for mee thinketh it is against nature, that the Father should slay his owne children for ỹ health of a strang man: the Emperor said, say not that yee be a strange man, for I loue you as I doe my selfe, & therefore if I had Ten children, I should not spare one aliue to haue your health. After that the Emperour watched & espyed his time when the Empres and the Ladies and chamberers were out of the way, and when time was, hee entred

into the Chamber whereas the Children slept, and drew out his knife and cut asunder both their throates, and gathered the blood in a vessell, and then he bathed & washed Alexander, and when hee was bathed, his bodie and flesh was as faire and as cleane as though it had been of a young child. Then the Emperor had knowledge of his vilage, and killed him, saying: O good Alexander, now I see you in the same fourme which I haue oftentimes delighted in.

Blessed be God that euer I had these children by whom yee bee holpen and made whole, & yet will no man of the death of the Children, saue onely the Emperour and Alexander. And when the Emperour saw that Alexander was perfectly healed, hee saide vnto him, I shall ordaine for you an honest companie and ye shall goe from hence x. miles, and the next day send vnto me a messenger, and shew openly

vnto

vnto mee of your comming, & I shall then with all solemnitie come & meet you, and ye shall abide with me vnto the time that we may prouide for the recouering of your Realme: this councell pleased Alexander right well, and according to the same was done, for on the next day came the Messenger to the Emperour, shewing to him the coming of king Alexander. And when the Empresse heard that, she was right glad, and sayd vnto the Emperour, O my Lord, haue ye not now a cause of great ioy, that king Alexander is now coming, whom ye of a long time haue not seene: and if it please you to goe and meete him with your Lords & seruants, I shall follow you with my Ladies and Gentlewomen, and yet wist not shee of the death of her two Children. Then rode they forth with a great companie, and mette with the good king Alexander: and when they mette together, with

great reuerence and honour they receiued him, and with great gladnesse and ioy they brought him into the Pallaice. And when the time of dinner was come, Alexander was set at the table betweene the Emperor and the Empresse, and all the cheere that shee could make shee did to him, and when the Emperour perceiued that, he was right well pleased, & sayd, O mine owne Florentine, I ioy aboue all things, that yee make to King Alexander so good cheere: then sayd she, wherefore should I not, is not his cõpanie to vs both ioy and gladnesse, but more to you my Lord, for this dignitie that yee are in, by him yee are promoted, and many times hee hath saued you from the death. The Emperor sayd, then I pray you mine owne Florentine that ye wil take heed to my wordes that I shall say to you; saw ye not that fowle lazar which the last day sate before the table, and prayed

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me for the loue of God and king Alexander, that I would giue him drinke, she sayd, my Lord I saw him well, a more honorable man I neuer beheld. Then said the Emperor, I demaund now this of you, I put case that hee were king Alexander, and that hee in any wise could not be made whole but with the blood of your Sonnes the which ye in one day brought into this World, would you not that their blood were shed, that he might bath him therein, to the intent that by the same he might haue perfect healthy as now ye see him in? She sayd my Lord wherefore demaund ye me that question? I say, let you haue knowledge of troth, that if I had ten sons I should gladly slay them with mine owne handes, for to prepare and ordaine for him a bath, and would wash him therein mine owne selfe, rather than I should leaue him in such perill, for God might well send vs

mo Children, but such a true Freend were a thinge impossible for vs to recouer or find. When the Emperour hard this of her, he was well content and pleased in his mind & said, O wife had ye leuer haue your children dead, then Alexander should be in the sickenesse of Leaprosie: then shall I open & shew you now the troth of the matter: that foule Lazar the which you saw was Alexander that sitteth heere, and by that manner is made whole with the blood of your Sonnes, and they are dead: as the Empresse heard that, shee began to sorrow as nature would, although shee had sayd before that shee had leuer see her Children dead, than she should suffer Alexander in such paine. The Nourishers of the Children vnderstanding this, with great crying and weping, went to the Noursery and chamber of them, and great sorrowe and bewayling was made throughout all the Emperours

Court

Court for his sonnes: and when the noursbers caine to the Chamber, they found the Children playing and singing a Song of prayse to the Father, and the Son, and the holy Ghost, for restoring againe of their liues, & then went they againe in all haste vnto the Emperour, and shewed him that his sonnes were liuing, and that about their throates where as they were rut, they had a Circle of thread of gould: and thereof was great ioy and gladnesse in all the Court, and gaue thankes vnto almightie GOD for that great Miracle and woonderous worke. After that, the Emperor gathered and assembled a great multitude and companie of people together, and went with Alexander into Egypt, and set him againe in his Royaltie and possession of his Realme: and the Queene with the Knight which liued together in Adulterie, he caused them both to bee burnt. And

when

when this was done, the Emperour had one onely Sister, whom he gaue Alexander to be his wife. And when King Alexander had all his Realme obtayned againe, and was set in good rest and peace, the Emperour went againe vnto his Empire, and King Alexander stight wisely and manly gouerned himselfe in his affaires, so that he ouercame all his enemies and Rebels. And when he was in all his glorie, peace, and might, he had mind and thought vppon his Father and Mother, by whome he was cast into the sea, who dwelled in farre partes, from thence he sent vnto them a messenger, and let them haue knowledge that the King of Egipt vppon such a day would bee with them to eate and drinke, and to make good cheere. And when the Messenger was come to them, they receiued him with great ioy & gladnes, and with gifts largely to him giuen, sent him backe againe saying,

saying, that their seruices should bee ready at all times for to doe the King pleasure, but that could they neuer by power fully discerne, that hee would vouchsafe to shew them that honour whereof they were not worthy, for to come to them to eat, drinke, & sport him. The Messenger went againe to the King, and shewed to him how gladly that they would receiue him, & what reward they had giuen him, and how faithfull they were and readie to doe him any seruice at his commaundement, wherewith the King was pleased. And when the day was come that was set, the King with a great company rode towards his fathers house, the which was to the Knight his father and to his mother, vnknowne that hee was their Son. When the King was come nigh vnto his fathers castle, the Knight rode to meete and receiue him: & when he came nigh vnto the King, hee descended

ded from his horse, and reuerenced him with his knee on the earth, but the King tooke him vp presently and commanded him to ascend againe vpon his horse, & rode so together cheek by cheek vnto the Castle. And when they were come thether, the Mother came to him and fel vpon her knees to the earth & welcomed him gladly, the King tooke her louingly vp, & kissed her right friendly: shee sayd, my most honorable Lord ye doe to vs vnworthy, great honour with the presence of your most noble Person, which we neuer shall deserue. After that the meat was all readie, and that the time was come to goe to dinner, the Father came with a bason and ewer, and ỹ Mother with a towell, saying, Sir all things are ready, pleaseth it you to wash: and when the King saw that, he smiled & said to himselfe: now is the song of the Nightingale true, for my Father and my Mother should

gladly

gladly fulfill as I haue sayd, if that I my selfe would thereto consent, and suffer them for to doe it: but he would not suffer them to doe vnto him such seruice, saying, your age is for to bee honoured and worshipped, and therefore I will none of it, and then called vnto him one of his seruants, ỹ which serued him thereof. Then sayd the knight, yee will not suffer vs to doe it for our honour, for we are not worthy thereof. Then sayd the king, haue I not sayd, that for your age I forbeare you it: When the king was set at the Table, hee set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left side, and they as much as they might beheld his Vsage and countenance. The Dinner done, the king entred into a Chamber, and made the knight with his Ladie to come to him, and commaunded all others to auoid. And when they were thus alone, then the king

sayd

sayd vnto them, haue ye no children? they answeared, we haue neither son nor daughter: and the king sayd, had ye neuer none? the knight answered, wee had one Sonne, but hee is dead long agone. Then the king asked of what death died he? the knight said, a naturall death. Then said the king, if I may otherwise know that he dyed, then are yee found with a fault. Then asked the knight, my Lord, wherefore enquire yee thus after our son? The king answered, that do I not without cause, & therefore I will know of what death hee dyed: and if yee will not tell me, I shall cause you to die a shamefull death. When they heard that, they fell to the ground vpon their knees before him, and asked him mercy & forgiuenes of their liues. The king would not suffer them to kneele, but shortly tooke them vp and sayd, to that intent came I not into your house to eate your bread, and be-

betray you, but say to mee the truth, and yee shall bee saued, for it is giuen mee to vnderstand that you haue put him to death, and if that yee come in iudgement, you must die a shamefull death. Then sayd the knight, Lord pardon me my life, and I shall shew you the verie troth. The king sayd, feare not, for I shall doe vnto you no harme. Then sayd he, Soueraigne lord, we had a Sonne that was wise & lettered, and right well vnderstood: and vppon a time as he stood before vs and serued at ꝑ table there came a Nightingale that right sweetly sung, whose song he began to interpret and tell vs what it meant & said, this bird singeth, that I shall become so great and mightie a Lord, that it shall be to your honor and aduancement, in such wise, that ye my father shalbe glad to hould the bason with water to wash my handes, & my Mother the towell, if that I should suffer it, and when I

heard that, I was sore moued, and cast him into the Sea for to drowne him. Then sayd the king, what euill might haue come to you if he had been made so great and mightie? meethinketh it should haue been your honour & profit: the knight said, Lord it was no reason but a woodnesse. The king answeared, that was a great foolishnes of you, that ye would doe against the ordinance and will of God, but now yee shall know for troth, I am your son that ye cast into the sea, and God of his great mercy and goodnes hath saued me, and by his grace hath brought me out to this estate & dignitie: and the Father & Mother hearing that, with feare and ioy replenished, fell flat to the ground, whome he louingly and friendly tooke vp, saying, feare not, but rather be glad and ioyous, for yee shall nothing suffer, but my exaltation shall be your glory, ioy, and profite, and kist both his Father

and mother with great ioy and gladnesse. Then beganne the Mother to weepe, and the King said, weepe not, but be of good chere, for in my realme you shall bee honoured aboue mee during my life, and took them with him into his Realme, where they dwelled together in honour and ioy, and ended their dayes with ioy and mirth.

Here followeth the application of the Example to the purpose.

Then sayd the Emperors sonne, Lord yee haue understood what I haue said. The Emperor said right well. Then sayd the sonne, my most Honourable and redoubted Father, although that God hath giuen and endued mee with wisedome and vnderstanding aboue other, that shall not bee in impairing of your honour and might, but more for the preseruation of the same. So in likewise the Kinges Maiestie, which was nothing to the hindrance of the Father,

but rather for his worship and profit, for as long as they liued, they were honoured in his Realme. Then said the Emperor, my deere son I will all whole reigne to you the Empire to gouerne, for I perceiue well by your Narration that ye haue to mee declared, that it is best for mee and most for mine ease, that I leaue this businesse and labour, and take me to more rest, for I am old and feeble. The Son answeared his Father, my Lord Father, so it shall not bee, but as long as yee liue, yee shall haue the authoritie and might of the Empire to doe your commaund, as it appertayneth vnto an Emperor, but in all businesse that are laborous, I will alwayes be readie to minister and to serue you according to my dutie.

How Iudgement was giuen vppon the Empresse, and how shee and her Louer were put to death.

Then

Then the Emperour commaunded the Iustices to sit in Iudgement, and bring again the Empresse before them with the Ladies, and the Knaue her best beloued cloathed in vesture of a woman, which he made to stand next vnto her: then the emperors Son asked a sentence & iudgment vpon them, saying,

O Lord Father, as ye be Emperour of all the World, and your Maiesty and power requireth to do true iustice vnto all people that desire it: So nowe I demaund that yee this day giue right sentente and true iudgement vpon the vntroth, falshood, and shame put and alleadged to me by the Empres, for the which I haue seuen times been led to the Gallowes, and haue stood in great iopardie & perill of my life; and also that shee hath been to you vntrue of her body, as ye haue seen by good proofe made before you, and the which I aske iudgement

and

and therefore commaund your iustices to giue sentence thereupon according to right & law. Anon as the Empresse heard this, she fell flat to the earth before the Emperour, and asked mercy and forgiuenes, but it helped nor profited nothing, for the Sonne would haue right, and desired iudgement. Then spake the Iustices, her owne deedes condemne her, and the report of her lemman by her found, therfore we giue sentence against the Empres that shee shall bee bound to a horse taile, & drawne through all the streets of the Citie to the place of execution, and there to be burnt: wee iudge also and giue sentence against the ribaud, that hee shalbe quartered & smitten in peeces, & his flesh cast to the hounds and birdes of the aire, for to deuour him: and this sentence was approbated and allowed of al people. Hereafter in short time died the Emperour, and Diocletian his son gouer-

ned

ned and ruled the Empire with great wisedome, and held and kept his Maisters with hun in great honour and glozie. By whose Counsell and wisedome hee gouerned the Empire, that hee excelled all his predecessors, in riches and doing iustice and right. And his Maisters loued him aboue all other things in the world. So that many times they put themselues in great perill and ieopardie of their liues for him. And at last ended their dayes in great ioy and honour, to the praise of almightie God.

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